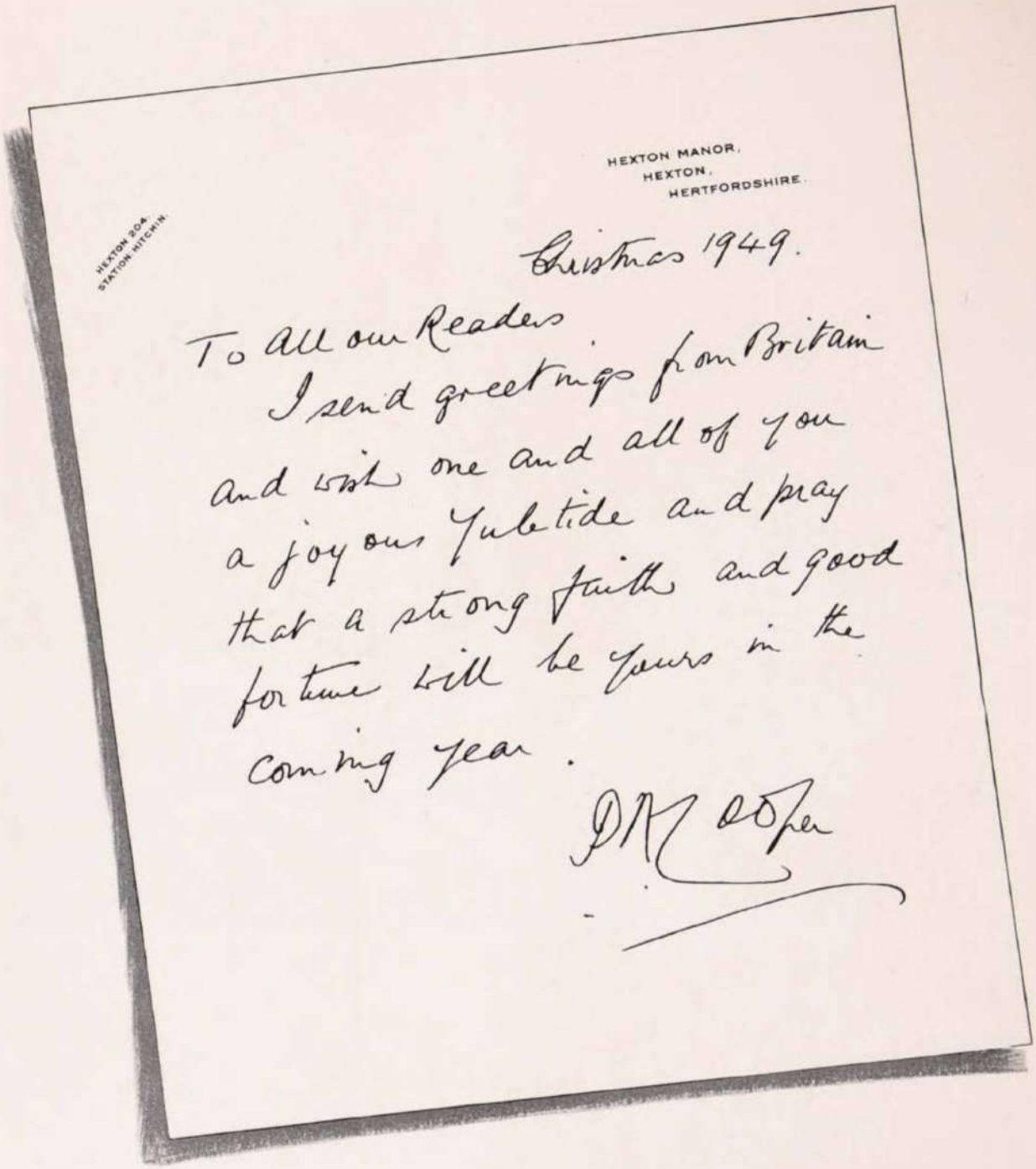
The Beaver

A MAGAZINE OF THE NORTH

PUBLISHED QUARTERLY BY Hudson's Bay Company. OUTFIT 280 DEC. 1949
INCORPORATED 2ND MAY 1670



HEXTON MANOR,
HEXTON,
HERTFORDSHIRE.

HEXTON 204
STATION HITCHIN.

Christmas 1949.

To all our Readers.

I send greetings from Britain and wish one and all of you a joyous Yuletide and pray that a strong faith and good fortune will be yours in the coming year.

D M Cooper

The Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company sends greetings.

The Beaver

A MAGAZINE OF THE NORTH

OUTFIT 280

DECEMBER 1949

Merry Christmas! J. H. Webster

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ONE DOLLAR A YEAR

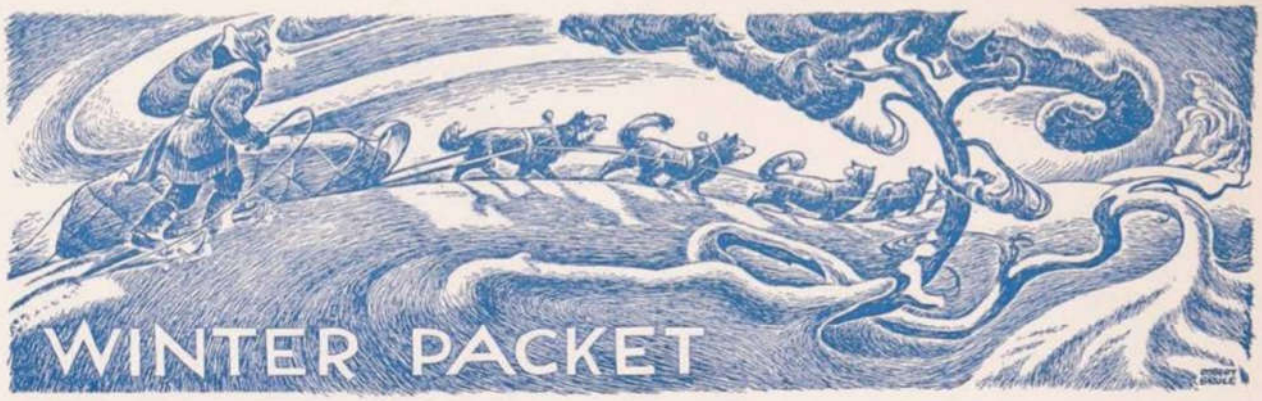
PUBLISHED QUARTERLY BY

HUDSON'S BAY HOUSE Hudson's Bay Company. WINNIPEG, CANADA

INCORPORATED 2ND MAY 1670.

THE BEAVER is published quarterly by the Governor and Company of Adventurers of England trading into Hudson's Bay, commonly known as the Hudson's Bay Company. It is edited at Hudson's Bay House, Winnipeg, at the office of the Canadian Committee. Yearly subscription, one dollar; single copies, twenty-five cents. THE BEAVER is entered at the second class postal rate. Its editorial interests include the whole field of travel, exploration and trade in the Canadian North as well as the current activities and historical background of the Hudson's Bay Company, in all its departments throughout Canada. THE BEAVER assumes no liability for unsolicited manuscript or photographs. Contributions are however solicited, and the utmost care will be taken of all material received. Correspondence on points of historic interest is encouraged. The entire content of THE BEAVER is protected by copyright, but reproduction rights may be given upon application. Address: THE BEAVER, Hudson's Bay House, Winnipeg.

The Beaver is printed for the Hudson's Bay Company by Saults & Pollard Limited, Winnipeg, Canada; the engravings are made by Brigdens of Winnipeg, Limited.



Twenty Miles Up

This autumn at Churchill on Hudson Bay some American scientists probed the secrets of cosmic ray activity more than 100,000 feet above the Earth's surface. One of the chief theories they sought to test held that the sun is surrounded by a constant magnetic field similar to that found on the Earth. In making the tests, Geiger counters were sent aloft in free balloons to twenty-mile altitudes.

The expedition was sponsored by the National Geographic Society and the Bartol Research Institute of Swarthmore, Pa. Dr. Martin A. Pomerantz of the latter institution was in charge, and he now reports that his findings have blown that widely accepted theory sky high—and we do mean sky. His recording instruments penetrated to the outermost one percent of the Earth's atmosphere.

These experiments recall another series of scientific observations which were carried out at the same place 180 years ago. Two astronomers, William Wales and Joseph Dymond, had been sent out by the Royal Society in 1768 to observe the transit of Venus on June 3 the next year. They arrived in August at Prince of Wales's Fort, where they spent a very cold winter, and having recorded their findings, sailed for home in September 1769.

Thus, in order to be on the spot in June, they had to get there ten months early; and they couldn't get away until the Company ship was ready to sail, three months after their observations had been completed. Thirteen months stay, plus another couple of months at sea, just for one night's work. Dr. Pomerantz and his friends found it much easier. They got there and back in a few hours' flying time.

Maiden Voyages

This summer, two new Company supply ships sailed on their maiden voyages into the Eastern and Western Arctics. Commanded by Capt. A. C. Lloyd, the steel motor-ship *Rupertsland* left Montreal on July 8 and docked at Halifax on October 12, having covered about 10,000 miles in between, and accomplished four voyages of supply to the posts of Hudson Bay and Strait.

The *Rupertsland* is about half the size of her famed predecessor *Nascopie*, being only 170 feet long, with a gross tonnage of 664, so that she was able to get into a number of posts where the heavier *Nascopie* could not call. Her Montreal cargo was discharged in Hudson Strait and Ungava Bay, after which she headed for Churchill and took on another cargo for posts on the east side of the Bay. Back at the Manitoban seaport, she loaded supplies for Southampton Island airport and post, then returned for a third call to take on cargo for her homeward voyage via Chesterfield Inlet, Baker Lake, and Frobisher Bay. The Company's posts north of there were supplied by the chartered vessel *Terra Nova*.

The new ship for the Western Arctic, the wooden motor vessel *Fort Hearne*, sailed from Halifax on May 13 to Port Alfred on the Saguenay, then south to Barbados, where she took on a cargo (no, not rum—molasses) and headed west for the Panama Canal. She stopped at San Pedro, Calif., and reached Vancouver on June 30. From there she sailed via Dutch Harbour to Bering Strait, and rounding Point Barrow, arrived at Tuktuk on August 9 in time to load a cargo of trade goods for Reid Island, Coppermine, Bathurst Inlet, and Cambridge Bay. She is wintering at Tuktuk.

Cover Picture

The picture on the cover of this issue, from a painting by Franklin Arbuckle of Montreal, is the same as that used on the Company's 1950 calendar. It depicts John Pritchard of Red River (with the blanket capote) and Isaac Fowler, an American axeman, on their way to Red River from Montreal in 1814. A full account of this remarkable journey was given in the *Beaver* for June 1948.

The scene is somewhere along the Abitibi River where, as Colin Robertson says, "his canoe was taken by the ice." That is why Pritchard in the picture is making a toboggan and snowshoes—the frames for which lie on the ground behind him. Fowler, holding a fish he has speared in the nearby waterfall, stands watching him.

They were amazingly self-sufficient, those old fur traders, and the thought of being alone in a fast-freezing wilderness, with no means of transportation but a useless canoe, probably didn't faze them in the

least. They had a couple of weeks to wait before winter travel would become feasible, so they simply set up a birch-bark wigwam and employed their time in making snowshoes and toboggans with no tools but an axe and a crooked knife. (The Indians, of course, had done this every winter for centuries, and only in the past hundred and fifty years or so had they possessed iron and steel tools.)

But the most amazing part of the Pritchard-Fowler junket was the length of the journey. Pritchard had heard in Montreal that the Nor'westers were going to attack the Selkirk Settlement at Red River, so he reported the fact to Colin Robertson, the H B C's Montreal agent. Robertson then asked "little Pritchard," as he calls him, to travel in the dead of winter to warn the settlers. And because the shortest route, by way of the Great Lakes, was guarded by the Nor'westers, he decided that Pritchard would have to go all the way round by Moose and York Factories, up the Hayes River and down Lake Winnipeg to the settlement—a journey through the winter wilds, mostly on snowshoes and dragging a toboggan, of some two thousand miles.

To accompany him, Robertson sent Fowler and three other men. The three others went only as far as Moose, but Fowler stuck it out to the end—doubtless one of the earliest instances of Canadian-American co-operation in the North.

Pritchard, incidentally, became one of the leading lights in the Red River settlement, and his grandson, Samuel Pritchard Matheson, became Archbishop of Rupert's Land and Primate of All Canada.

Cumberland House

Few people other than northerners and those interested in the history of the North have heard of Cumberland House, Saskatchewan. After all, it's just a small village in the bush, connected only by river with the Outside, and forty miles in an air line from the nearest railway at The Pas. Yet it is the oldest settlement in Western Canada.

Last September, Cumberland House celebrated its 175th birthday. It was founded by none other than the celebrated Arctic explorer, Samuel Hearne, who had returned two years before from his historic trek to the mouth of the Coppermine River. Up to that time the only Company post inland from Hudson Bay had been Henley House, built in 1743 about one hundred and twenty miles up the Albany. But competition from the Montreal traders had forced the H B C to change their century-old policy, and start building forts right in the Indian's hunting grounds. Cumberland House was the first of these.

Hearne chose the site for the new post on September 3, 1774. The first building erected was a "log tent," which served as a dwelling during the winter, with a small storeroom on one end. Foundation logs for the main building were not laid until April 6 the following year, and by the time Hearne left for York Factory on May 29, it had not been completed. Trading, however, was carried on during the winter, and has been ever since. On Christmas Eve, seven years ago, the Company post was destroyed by fire. Now a fine modern group of buildings, in telephonic communication with The Pas, stands in its place.

Jimmy Bell

Jimmy Bell was a true Arctic man, who was more than once an unwitting contributor to the *Beaver*. In 1943 we published an extract from his Arctic Bay journal, describing the plight of an Eskimo father and son when their igloo was raided by a polar bear, one midwinter's night. A well-known university professor who read it described the piece as fine, stark prose writing—and yet it was printed just as it came from the journal, written for the eyes of nobody but one or two Company officials. No doubt Jimmy was surprised to find his journal entry reproduced on a special page of the *Beaver*, but he would have been astounded if he had heard his humble effort described in such glowing terms.

Jimmy, indeed, was a man of the simple tastes and habits that so often characterize his countrymen, one who loved the uncomplicated life of the North, a shrewd trader when it came to dealing with the little brown men of the Arctic, yet watching over them—as the journal entry shows—with a just and fatherly eye. He had, moreover, that cardinal virtue of dependability, and that fine loyalty to the Company which is the hallmark of the true Hudson's Bay man.

Even towards the end, when deep seated pain made it imperative for him to leave his beloved Arctic, he put the Company's interests above his own. Flown out to Winnipeg from Cape Dorset, his last post, he lay for several weeks in a hospital bed, wasted by disease, until one day in September when he died.

Few friends were present at the last service, because not many white people in Canada knew him. But in the lonely settlements and the Eskimo camps strung out along the Arctic coasts, there was great sorrow when the news flashed north that *Kweeniook* would not come back again.

Contributors

Flora Hamilton Burns is a Victoria writer with historical interests. W. J. Macdonald was her grandfather. . . . Freeda Fleming is a free lance writer who lives at Rocky Mountain House. . . . Richard Glover is assistant professor of history at the University of Manitoba. He was formerly a master at two well known boys' schools. . . . Ruth Harvey is the daughter of C. P. Walker, who built and operated the celebrated Walker Theatre of Winnipeg. . . . Wallace Kirkland is a well known United States photographer who has travelled considerably in Northern Canada. . . . W. L. Morton is professor of Canadian history at the University of Manitoba. . . . J. Lewis Robinson is assistant professor of geography at the University of British Columbia. . . . Margaret Vollmer is a Toronto free lance radio writer who covers Canada pretty thoroughly. . . . Frank Walker is an editorial writer with the *Winnipeg Free Press*. . . . W. Stewart Wallace is librarian of the University of Toronto library. . . . Canon J. H. Webster is the Anglican missionary at Coppermine.

PRESIDENT FOR A DAY

by Frank Walker

The comic opera "Republic of Manitoba" was headed by one of the absurdest characters in prairie history.

THESE days when republics are respectable members of the commonwealth and even kings can become first citizens, the experiment of Mr. Thomas Spence in the settlement of Portage la Prairie seems almost commonplace. Furthermore, it failed; and failures are rarely great. It was the trial that finished it, of course. No government could have survived that, even a government led by Mr. Spence, late, as he used to say, officer in Colonel Gorman's regiment of foot, acquaintance of D'Arcy McGee, land surveyor and, finest achievement of all, first and only president of the Republic of Manitoba. Lesser men, in fact, would have quit trying there and then, and it is his measure that he carried on long enough to receive a monumental rebuff from the Duke of Buckingham.

But Thomas Spence was never an ordinary man. From his arrival in the little Red River settlement early in the winter of 1866, until the salt mines claimed him two years later, he cut a daring and delightful swath through western history. It is a tribute to him that he could do what he did in the brief space of twenty-four months, and no tribute to the present that he is almost forgotten. In the two years between his arrival in the settlement and his entry into the salt business on the shore of Lake Manitoba, he managed a career as full of rascality and slick politics as the West has seen. He was representative of his period. He came when the flood of agitation for self-government was reaching its crest. He added his own peculiar talents to it, and if these proved of ephemeral value, they have left us with a choice incident of history.

He shines in two particular episodes, the first of which ended in wild confusion and one of the finest brawls in the history of the Red River settlement, and the second—the subject of this narrative—where he became president of the Republic of Manitoba. The first ended in "Dutch George" Emmerling's bar, and resulted in its general destruction; the second involved the little settlement at Portage. In between he was reportedly responsible for a letter sent to His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, "to the first born of our Great Mother over the sea," ostensibly from the

". . . suggesting loudly that the money was going for the purchase of beer and whisky for the president."

Indians of the Red River. It was an invitation offering free board and free hunting, including buffalo, and an appointment as "Royal Chief."

The prince, fortunately, was unable to accept and Mr. Spence was spared to turn his talents to the formation of that republic upon which his fame rests. Sometime in the spring of 1867, he moved from Fort Garry to Portage, where, says Mr. Robert B. Hill, the Manitoba historian, "from his peculiar disposition, he was not long in inaugurating himself as one of the leading factional spirits of the settlement." Once again Mr. Spence found conditions eminently suitable to his talents. Old Archdeacon Cockran, who had founded the settlement in 1851, had ruled over it with stern moral and spiritual authority for more than a decade. He had organized a council and court of jurisdiction resembling the court of Assiniboia which presided at Fort Garry. He had established trial by jury, though he was not above summary justice when he felt the occasion called for it. But in 1865 he had died. Into the gap left by his death Mr. Spence moved quickly. The position of the settlement was strange. It was outside the judicial district of Assiniboia, into which, as a matter of fact, it had been refused incorporation. Such laws as it had were of its own making. They had no backing but the voluntary co-operation of the settlers. Quite obviously it was far too loose a social system for Mr. Spence to tolerate.

He set about to organize it. Within a few months of his arrival the republic was born, though why he chose this form of government remains a mystery. He had not shown republican tendencies during his short stay at Fort Garry. Rather, he had opposed the American and supported the Canadian party. It may have been a whim. Or it may have been the only system which he thought could insure the supremacy of Thomas Spence. Certainly he does not seem to have been very clear as to the exact status of his government. As a good politician, he was strictly a believer in politics as "the art of the possible," and if it had to be a republic under a monarchy, well, that was all right too.

In any event, there it was, before the first snows, so far organized as to have Mr. Spence as president, Mr. J. Finlay Wray as secretary, and a council. There was even an oath of allegiance for such of the inhabitants of the Republic of Manitoba as felt like taking it. The boundaries were indefinite, limited only on the east by the judicial district of Assiniboia, but spreading to the north and west in vast, unending waves, which must have troubled the surveyor in the president.

The first task of the new government was, naturally enough, the construction of a court house and a jail. But this needed funds, and funds meant a system of taxation. Mr. Spence was evidently too smart a politician to consider a tax on property. A customs tariff was decided upon. And trouble began. With a haughty disdain for Mr. Spence's government, the officer in charge of the Hudson's Bay post in the settlement refused to accept the notice which was served on all traders. He would pay no tax on his goods unless ordered to do so by the government of Rupert's Land. Thus, in one jump, the largest potential taxpayer was out of the net, but not for long, they hoped. The council decided to go ahead with its business. The jail was a-building and when it was ready there would be more to say on this matter of taxes.

". . . in the ensuing tussle Mr. McPherson was able to escape."

Meanwhile, however, more trouble had appeared in the person of one McPherson, a shoemaker, who lived at High Bluff, not far from the settlement, and who had little use for Mr. Spence, his dignity or his office. Mr. McPherson, in between mending shoes, moved around the settlement, suggesting loudly that the money raised from taxes, instead of going into the jail, was actually going for the purchase of beer and whisky for the president and his colleagues. The suggestion had the added merit of being generally accepted as true, and it became a source of considerable embarrassment to the government. To Mr. Spence's credit, reason preceded force. It was suggested to Mr. McPherson that he might be better occupied than in the spreading of such gossip. Such tolerance was of no avail. McPherson merely improved and embellished his stories and the end became clearly inevitable. He was indicted for treason and a warrant issued for his arrest.

The full force of the law in the person of the republic's two constables, William Hudson and Henry Anderson, was despatched, Mr. Hill tells us, to bring him in "dead or alive." Such a task required fortification and, before setting out to effect the arrest, the two constables drank freely of government whisky. Then they proceeded on their way, heralding their advance with much noise. They found Mr. McPherson ostentatiously cleaning his revolver, having been warned of their visit by the neighbours.

Mr. Hudson went first. He produced his warrant and then attempted to enforce it. While he and McPherson were wrestling, the second constable entered, and it is significant evidence of their condition that in the ensuing tussle Mr. McPherson was able to escape. He left by foot, in the general direction of Assiniboia.

The chase was now on and it does not require any imagination to catch in it the full flavour of the republic. On foot, out ahead, was McPherson the cobbler, fifty miles to go to safety, for he could hardly have hoped to find any real security in an invisible boundary; behind, comfortably ensconced in a jumper and well fortified with whisky, the Law, its dignity ruffled. The snow, off the trail, was deep and McPherson, attempting to even up the odds, plunged into it, when he was over-hauled. This time he did not escape. After a brief but severe struggle, he was pulled down and thrown into the low sleigh. His clothes were badly torn.

If we now have the villain and the victim of the story, the hero is about to arrive, in the person of

" 'Save me, save me, McLean!' shouted McPherson, as Hudson attempted to drag him back."

John McLean, whose patriarchal face stares out at us from the pages of Hill's history. McLean had come to the settlement when it had no more than sixty houses and when the white settlers numbered no more than two or three. His arrival was the first break in the old regime of the Indian and the Métis, and he was an unpopular figure. But, by the time of the republic, he was established in the community, and this afternoon he was on his way home when the jumper and its three occupants hove in sight. As it neared the McLean sleigh, one of the men jumped out and ran towards him. It was McPherson, holding up his tattered pants. Close behind him came Hudson.

"Fair play," cried McLean, thinking for some unexplained reason that it was a race.

"Save me, save me, McLean," shouted McPherson, as Hudson attempted to drag him back.

It was just the scene for the man who had faced up to hostile Indians and had once staggered the settlement by appearing in full dress, complete with tall silk hat, to deal with two bucks who had planned to steal his horses.

"Stand back!" shouted McLean, "or I'll rin the auger through ye."

Then he asked for an explanation, and having seen the warrant, urged McPherson to go peacefully, promising that he would be present to see justice done. That evening, with three miners who were visiting his home, he walked over to William Hudson's house, where the trial was taking place. The house was full. At one end of a long table sat Mr. Spence, at the other, McPherson. In between was a lamp, lighting up the heavy, bearded figures in their rough homespun clothes. The republic's hour of trial was at hand.

The records do not indicate a jury. In any event, circumstances rendered a verdict unnecessary. Though he had seen the warrant, McLean asked what the charge was.

"Treason to the laws of the republic," said Spence.

"We hae nae laws," replied McLean. "Wha's the accuser?"

"Mr. Spence," one of the constables told him.

That was enough. The old man bristled with righteous indignation.

"Come oot o' that, you whited sepulchre, ye canna act as judge and accuser baith."

It was high time order was restored. Things were getting out of hand very fast. Hudson ordered McLean to leave, or he would throw him out. McLean agreed to go but not, he added, through any fear of Hudson or Anderson, either. Whatever dignity had existed in the court had gone by this time. Hudson challenged McLean to a fight. McLean said he would wait and see if one would be necessary. He started to walk out of the room. Seeing Hudson and Anderson following him, Bob Hastie, one of the three miners who had accompanied McLean to the court, warned Anderson, "Ye're no gaun oot yer lane," and then he grabbed McPherson, exclaiming "Come oot o' that an' no be sittin' there like a fule."

McPherson must have been slow, for in the next second, Hastie jerked him away from the table. As he did so a brother of Anderson jumped him and threw him on his back. The brawl was on. Hastie, in turn, picked up Anderson and bounced him on the table, upsetting it and Spence also. In the dark, the miners drew their revolvers and fired into the ceiling. Nothing more was required to clear the court. Bodies flew out through the door and windows, and from under the table there was heard the plaintive voice of Mr. Thomas Spence:

"For God's sake, men, don't fire! I have a wife and family."

Less poignant phrases have marked the end of states!

For this was the end of the republic, as it was the end of the trial, though the following day another attempt was made to arrest Mr. McPherson, an attempt which was abandoned when one of the occupants of the house threatened to knock out the constable's brains.

That same day, McPherson and Spence met. McPherson asked him why he was being persecuted. Spence said, blandly, that he knew nothing about the matter. As far as he was concerned, it was all over. A new suit of clothes made things right and the *cause celebre* of the republic was over.

The little state makes another brief appearance in history. In February 1868, Mr. Spence visited Governor Dallas at Fort Garry. The governor was not helpful. No duties would be paid on Hudson's Bay Company goods and any attempt to collect them might be resisted by force. Furthermore, the oath of allegiance was illegal. There was one last hope. Mr. Spence wrote another of his famous letters, this time to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs:

"La Prairie, Manitoba,
"Via Red River Settlement,
"February 19th, 1868.

"My Lord,—As President-elect by the people of the newly organized Government and Council of Manitoba, in British territory, I have the dutiful honour of laying before your Lordship, for the consideration of Her Most Gracious Majesty our beloved Queen, the circumstances attending the creation of this self-supporting petty government in this isolated portion of Her Majesty's dominions, and, as loyal British subjects, we humbly and sincerely trust that Her Most Gracious Majesty, and her advisers, will be pleased forthwith to give this favorable recognition, it being simply our aim to develop our resources, improve the condition of the people, and generally advance and preserve British interests in this rising Far West.

"An humble address from the people of this settlement to Her Majesty the Queen was forwarded to the Governor-General of Canada, in June last, briefly setting forth the superior attractions of this portion of the British dominions, the growing population and the gradual influx of emigrants, and humbly praying for recognition, law and protection, to which no reply or acknowledgment has yet reached this people.

"Early in January last, at a public meeting of settlers, who numbered over 400, it was unanimously decided to at once proceed to the election and construction of a government, which has accordingly been carried out; a revenue imposed, public buildings commenced to carry out the laws, provision made for Indian treaties, the construction of roads and other public works, tending to promote the interests and welfare of the people.

"The boundaries of the jurisdiction being, for the time, proclaimed as follows: North from a point running due north from the boundary line of Assiniboia, till it strikes Lake Manitoba; thence from the point struck, a straight line across the said lake to Manitoba Post; thence by longitudinal line 51° till it intersects latitude 100°; west, by a line of latitude 100° to the boundary line of the United States and British America; east , the boundary line of the jurisdiction of the Council of Assiniboia; south, the boundary line between British North America and the United States.

"I have the honor to remain, my Lord,
"Your Lordship's obedient servant,
"T. SPENCE,
"Pres. of the Council."

What his Grace must have thought of this communication from the middle of nowhere, no one knows. It was probably considered just another spot of bother from what was, at the time, a very bothersome spot. Downing Street was used to such irritants. Instructions were issued to an under-secretary and the following reply sent off, full of "so-called," "probably not aware" and, "no force in law." It warms up pleasantly, to end with a flourishing reference to "co-agitators." It, too, is worth quoting.:

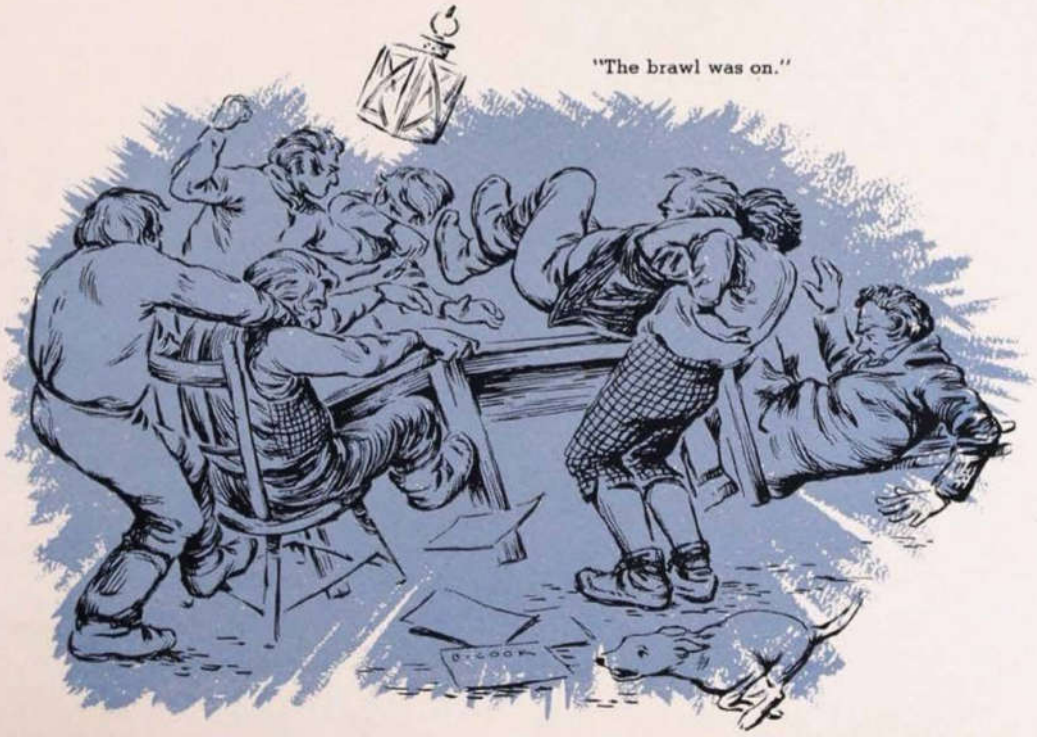
"Downing Street, May 30th, 1868.

"Sir,—I am directed by the Duke of Buckingham and Chandos to inform you that your letter of the 19th of February last, addressed to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, has been forwarded to this department, and that His Grace has also received a copy of a letter addressed by you to Mr. Angus Morrison, a member of the Canadian Parliament, dated 17th of February last. In these communications you explain that measures have been taken for creating a so-called self-supporting government in Manitoba, within the territory of the Hudson's Bay Company. The people of Manitoba are probably not aware that the creation of a separate government, in the manner set forth in these papers, has no force in law, and that they have no authority to create or organize a government, or even to set up municipal institutions (properly so called) for themselves, without reference to the Hudson's Bay Company or the Crown.

"Her Majesty's Government are advised that there is no objection to the people of Manitoba voluntarily submitting themselves to rules and regulations which they may agree to observe, for the greater protection and improvement of the territories in which they live, but which will have no force as regards others than those who may have so submitted themselves. As it is inferred that the intention is to exercise jurisdiction over offenders in criminal cases, to levy taxes compulsorily, and to attempt to put in force other powers which can only be exercised by a properly constituted government, I am desired to warn you that you and your co-agitators are acting illegally in this matter, and that by the course which you are adopting, you are incurring grave responsibilities.

"I am, Sir,
"Your obedient servant,
"....."

With that reply, nothing more is heard of the republic. It just faded away. Mr. Spence entered the salt business. And all was over except the movement of which it was a part. For all its comic opera quality, it represented that drift towards confederation which was soon to come about. Professor Arthur S. Morton, in his *History of the Canadian West*, suggests that the republic was established partly to put the Company in bad light before the Imperial Government. It may well have been. Mr. Spence's motives were not often what they appeared to be.



"The brawl was on."

WINTER ON JAMES'S BAY

Photographed by

Richard Harrington

Forty below at Moose Factory.

JAMES'S Bay was named after Captain Thomas James, who wintered there in 1631-2. Today, as in the case of Hudson's Bay, Mackenzie's River, and such, the apostrophe s has been removed by the Geographic Board of Canada, and with it an indefinable link with its discoverer. Half of the bay lies in Ontario, and half in Quebec. People in Ontario are fond of referring to Moosonee, the northern terminus of the Ontario Northland Railway, as their province's chief seaport, and to Moose Factory across the wide river as its oldest settlement. Moose Factory, part of which is seen in the photo above, was indeed founded over two hundred and seventy-five years ago; but it has been in continuous existence for less than two hundred and twenty.

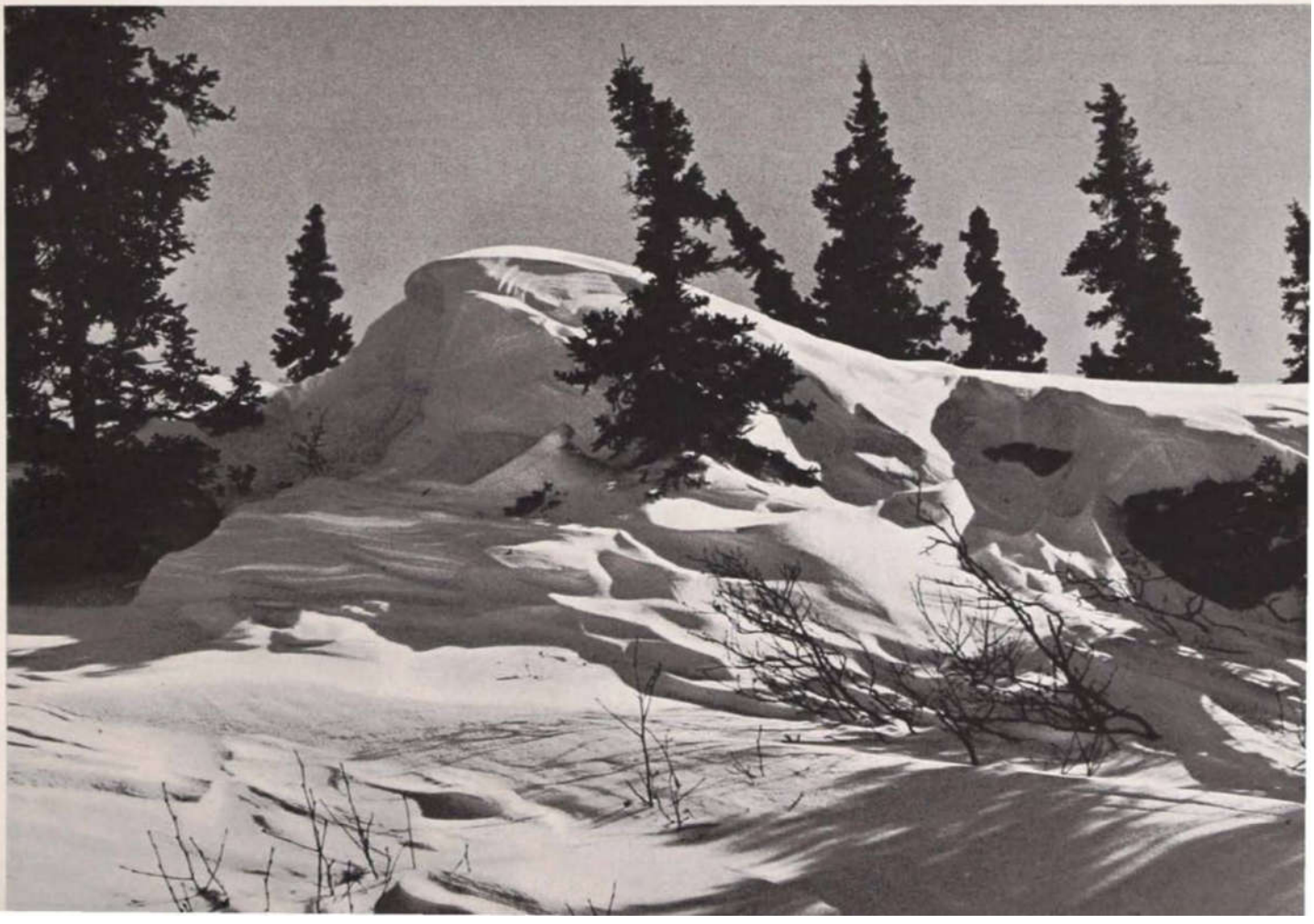
Rupert's House, on the Quebec side, founded five years before Moose Factory, was the cradle of white settlement in the vast area known as Rupert's Land, as well as of the huge James Bay beaver conservation project of to-day. From Charles Fort, as it was first called, a chain of forts was flung around the shores of James Bay. Moose, Albany, and Eastmain or Slude were built in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Later Hannah Bay, Fort George, Old Factory and Factory River were established on the Quebec side, and Moosonee, Attawapiskat, Kapisko and Leaf River in Ontario.

Most of these are (or were) isolated posts subsisting entirely on the fur trade. Travel between them was uncomfortable and hazardous—in summer by small coasting vessel or canoe, in winter by dog sled over the hard-packed snow of the bay. This hard snow makes James Bay winter travel unique, in that an Eskimo komatik with iced runners—a vehicle that belongs in the Arctic—can be employed on the sea ice, with dogs in fan hitch. But once the shelter of the shore woods is reached, snowshoes must be donned for the soft snow, and the dogs must fall into single file to tread the woodland trails.

Some of these pictures were taken on a five-hundred-mile komatik trip which Richard Harrington made from Port Harrison in the Arctic to Factory River on the east coast of James Bay. There are not many white men alive to-day who have made that trip, and Mr. Harrington is to be congratulated for his hardihood in making it as well as for the excellence of his pictures.

Another series of his photographs taken farther north on the same trip, in the country of the Eskimos, will appear in the March *Beaver*.

Wind sculpture along the shores of the bay.



Factory River, Quebec, forty miles north of Eastmain.

Northern gales carve the hard packed snow into fantastic shapes.

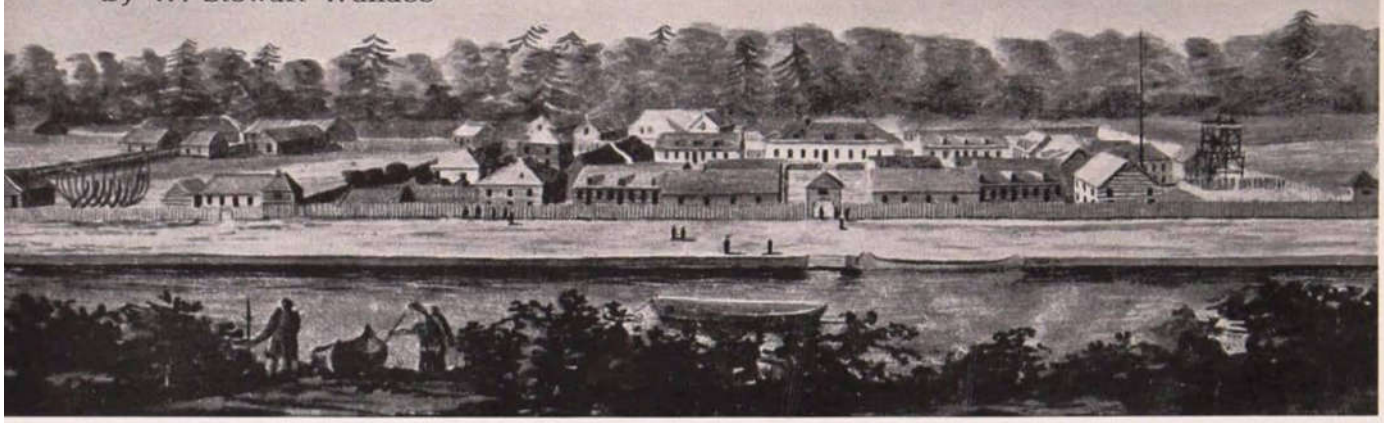
Fine foxes at Factory River.

James Bay supply ship in winter quarters at Moose.

Soft snow blankets the bows.

FORT WILLIAM of the FUR TRADE

by W. Stewart Wallace



The water colour of Fort William in 1812 which was recently "discovered" in Toronto. It is reproduced here by courtesy of the owner, Lt.-Col. S. A. Heward. Compare with Franchere's description below.

Wilderness headquarters of the North West Company, Fort William was the meeting place of great adventurers in the days of its glory.

FOR the first twenty years of the nineteenth century, Fort William was the wilderness headquarters of the North West Company. Before that the entrepot of the western fur trade had been Grand Portage, some forty-five miles west of Fort William on the north shore of Lake Superior; but in 1796 Grand Portage was found to be in United States territory, and it became clear that it would have to be abandoned. In 1798 Roderick Mackenzie re-discovered an old French route to the west which began at the mouth of the Kaministikwia river; and it was thereupon decided to remove the advanced headquarters of the North West Company to the mouth of this river. The building of Fort Kaministikwia (as Fort William was first named, after a post which had existed here during the French régime) began in 1801, and was completed about 1804. At one time, it was said, a thousand workmen were engaged in its construction.

This "new fort" soon became the capital of a commercial empire that stretched from the Great Lakes to the Pacific and from the sources of the Mississippi to the Arctic ocean. Here every summer the agents from Montreal met the wintering partners of the North West Company in what was a sort of annual parliament; and the canoes from departments as far away as the Columbia and the Mackenzie, with their cargoes of precious furs, met the big canoes from Montreal, with the outfit for the ensuing year. At the height of the season, Fort William became a teeming town with a population of over three thousand persons, in which the *hivernants*, or winterers, mingled with the *mangeurs de lard*, or *voyageurs* from Montreal. If we are to believe all reports, Fort William was at this season a scene of high wassail.

There are in the literature of the fur trade several descriptions of the physical appearance of Fort William under the Nor'Westers. In the summer of 1803, Alexander Henry the younger visited "our new establishment of Kamanistiquia." "We found," he said, "great improvements had been made for one winter —fort, store, shop, etc., built, but not enough dwelling houses. Only one range was erected, and that not complete; here were the mess room and apartments for the agents from Montreal, with a temporary kitchen adjoining. We were obliged to erect our tents during our stay, which seldom exceeded 20 days. Building was going on briskly in every corner of the fort; brick kilns had been erected and were turning out many bricks, so that we shall have everything complete and in good order before our arrival next year."

The most detailed description of Fort William in its heyday is that of Gabriel Franchère, who spent a week here in the summer of 1814. In the English translation of his *Narrative*, this is what he has to say:

"Fort William has really the appearance of a fort, with its palisade fifteen feet high, and that of a pretty village, from the number of edifices it encloses. In the middle of a spacious square rises a large building elegantly constructed, though of wood, with a long piazza or portico, raised about five feet from the ground, and surmounted by a balcony, extending along the whole front. In the centre is a saloon or hall, sixty feet in length by thirty in width, decorated with several pieces of painting, and some portraits of the leading partners. It is in this hall that the agents, partners, clerks, interpreters, and guides, take their meals together, at different tables. At each extremity of the apartment are two rooms; two of these are destined for the two principal agents; the other two to the steward and his department. The kitchen and servants' rooms are in the basement. On either side of this edifice, is another of the same extent, but of less elevation; they are each divided by a corridor running through its length, and contain each, a dozen pretty bed-rooms. One is destined for the wintering partners, the other for the clerks. On the east of the square is another building similar to the last two, and intended for the same use, and a warehouse where the furs are inspected and repacked for shipment. In the rear of these are the lodging-house of the guides,

another fur-warehouse, and finally, a powder magazine. The last is of stone, and has a roof covered with tin. At the angle is a sort of bastion, or look-out place, commanding a view of the lake. On the west side is seen a range of buildings, some of which serve for stores, and others for workshops; there is one for the equipment of the men, another for the fitting out of the canoes; one for the retail of goods, another where they sell liquors, bread, pork, butter, &c., and where a treat is given to the travellers who arrive. This consists in a white loaf, half a pound of butter, and a gill of rum. The *voyageurs* give this tavern the name of *Cantine salope*. Behind all this is another range, where we find the counting-house, a fine square building, and well-lighted; another storehouse of stone, tin-roofed; and a *jail*, not less necessary than the rest. The voyageurs give it the name of *pot au beurre*—the butter-tub. Beyond these we discover the shops of the carpenter, the cooper, the tinsmith, the blacksmith, &c.; and spacious yards and sheds for the shelter, reparation, and construction of canoes. Near the gate of the fort, which is on the south, are the quarters of the physician, and those of the chief clerk. Over the gate is a guard-house.

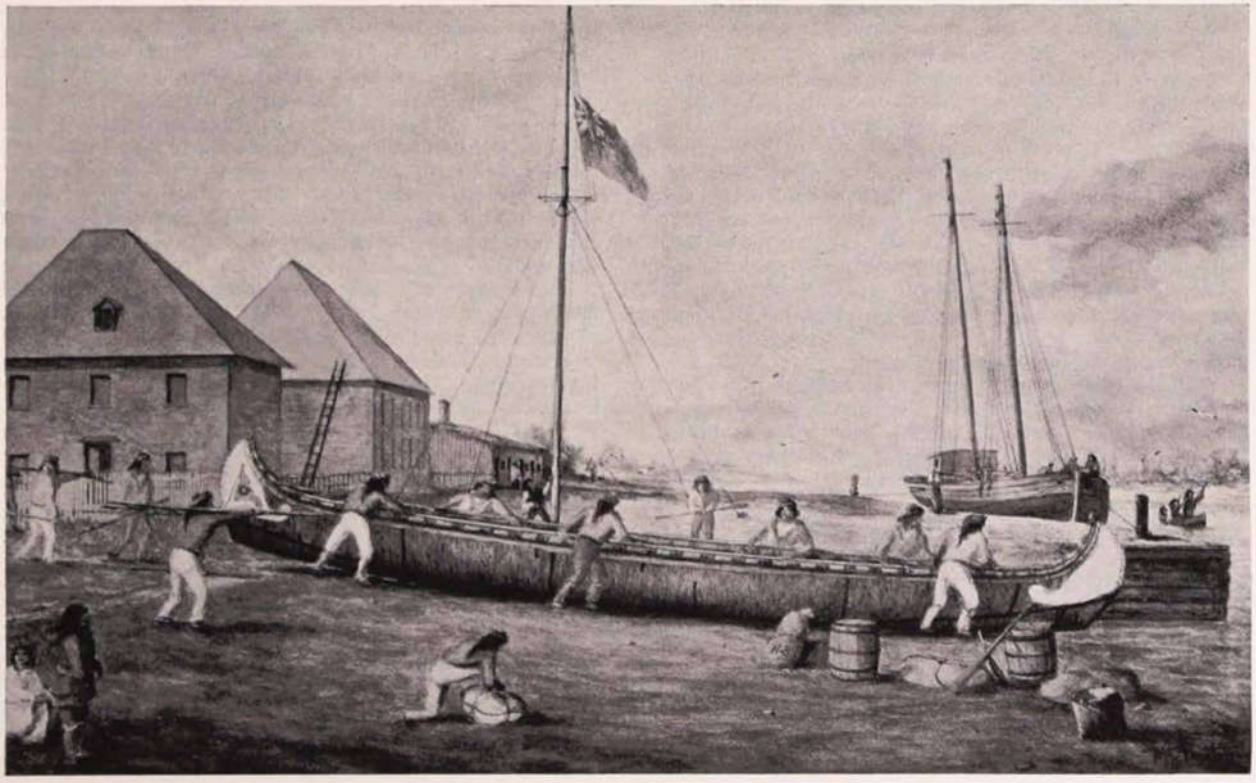
"As the river is deep at its entrance, the company has had a wharf constructed, extending the whole length of the fort, for the discharge of the vessels which it keeps on Lake Superior, whether to transport its furs from Fort William to the *Saut Ste. Marie*, or merchandise and provisions from *Saut Ste. Marie* to Fort William. The land behind the fort and on both sides of it, is cleared and under tillage. We saw barley, peas, and oats, which had a very fine appearance. At the end of the clearing is the burying-ground. There are also, on the opposite bank of the river, a certain number of log-houses, all inhabited by old Canadian *voyageurs*, worn out in the service of the company, without having enriched themselves."

Three years later, Ross Cox stopped at Fort William on his way back to Ireland from the Columbia; and he adds some interesting details:

"The buildings at Fort William consist of a large house, in which the dining-hall is situated, and in which the gentleman in charge resides; the council-house; a range of snug buildings for the accommodation of the people from the interior; a large counting-house; the doctor's residence; extensive stores for the merchandise and furs; a forge; various work-shops, with apartments for the mechanics, a number of whom are always stationed here. There is also a prison for refractory *voyageurs*. The whole is surrounded by wooden fortifications, flanked by bastions, and is sufficiently strong to withstand any attack from the natives. Outside the fort is a shipyard, in which the Company's vessels on the lake are built and repaired."

He describes the banqueting-hall in some detail: "The dining-hall is a noble apartment, and sufficiently capacious to entertain two hundred. A finely executed bust of the late Simon M'Tavish is placed in it, with portraits of various proprietors. A full-length likeness of Nelson, together with a splendid painting of the battle of the Nile, also decorate the walls, and were presented by the Hon. William M'Gillivray to the Company.* At the upper end of the hall there is a very large map of the Indian country, drawn with great accuracy by Mr. David Thompson, astronomer

Sir George Simpson's canoe and voyageurs at Fort William. A water colour by William Armstrong, done in 1909 from a sketch made there in 1860. Courtesy Canadian Breweries.



*See "The Riddle of the Paintings," by M. A. MacLeod; *Beaver* Dec. '48.

"Governor" John McIntyre's wife and daughters in the garden of the Hudson's Bay post at Fort William. Ethel M. Jones.

to the Company, and comprising all their trading-posts, from Hudson's Bay to the Pacific Ocean, and from Lake Superior to Athabasca and Great Slave Lake."

The only pictorial representation of Fort William under the Nor'Westers that has hitherto seen the light is a picture of "Fort Kaministiquia" in 1805 in Father Æneas McDonell Dawson's *Our strength and their strength*, published in Ottawa in 1870. This purports to be a "leggotyped" reproduction of an oil painting which was at one time in the possession of Dr. Edward Van Cortlandt of Ottawa, and which seems to have disappeared. Dr. Van Cortlandt died in 1875; and it is not easy, after three-quarters of a century, to discover what happened to his collection of pictures. The fact that the picture is labelled "Fort Kaministiquia, 1805," is an argument in favor of its authenticity; for it was not until 1807 that the fort was named Fort William, in honour of William McGillivray, the chief partner of the North West Company. But it may be doubted if it was a painting done on the spot. I doubt if any painting in oils was done at Fort William in 1805. Probably the picture was an oil painting done from memory or from a sketch.

That it was not an accurate representation is clear from the picture of Fort William in 1812 which is reproduced herewith. This picture, which has come to light only after the lapse of nearly a century and a half, has a curious history. It is a water-colour painted not later than 1812 by a young Orkneyman named Robert Irvine, who came to Canada about 1811 and took service with the North West Company as the master of the *Caledonia*, one of the Company's schooners on the Upper Lakes. Presumably he painted the picture while the *Caledonia* was tied to the wharf at Fort William in 1811 or 1812. After the outbreak of the war of 1812, both Robert Irvine and the *Caledonia* were commandeered by the Provincial Marine, and fought in several naval engagements. Lieut. Irvine was taken a prisoner of war by the Americans at the battle of Put-in-Bay, and spent a year or more interned, with other British officers, in the state penitentiary at Frankfort, Kentucky. On his repatriation, he stayed for a time in York (Toronto) with his relative, the Hon. George Crookshank, a member of the legislative council who was for a short time in 1819-20 receiver-general of the province. While staying in York, he did some water-colours of the lake front, of Toronto Island, of Queenston, and of Niagara Falls. In 1817 he went to visit relatives in New Brunswick; and from New Brunswick he went to the West Indies, where he died at some date not ascertained.

When he left York, he evidently left behind him the water-colours he had painted. These remained in the possession of the Hon. George Crookshank, and afterwards of his daughter, Mrs. Stephen Heward, and his grandson, Lieut.-Col. Stephen A. Heward. Colonel Heward tells me that when he was a child the pictures were used to adorn a screen in the children's nursery. Later, he realized that they were valuable, had them removed and mounted, and placed them in a portfolio. A short time ago he came across the portfolio, and thought I might be interested in seeing the pictures. He brought them in to my office for me to see, only three or four weeks before I was due to go to Fort William to address the Thunder Bay Historical Society on "Fort William under the Nor'Westers." God is sometimes good to His children!

By comparing Robert Irvine's picture of Fort William in 1812 with Gabriel Franchère's description of it in 1814, one can identify most of the buildings.

Fort William, as here depicted, was the scene of some stirring events. In 1816 it was captured by Lord Selkirk and his De Meuron soldiers; and William McGillivray and other partners of the North West Company were arrested and sent to Montreal for trial on charges of "High-Treason, Conspiracy, and Murder." Later, in 1821, Fort William was the scene of the last act in the so-called union of the North West and Hudson's Bay Companies, when Nicholas Garry, one of the directors of the Hudson's Bay Company, and Simon McGillivray, the brother of William McGillivray, met the partners of the North West Company, and made the final arrangements for

Judging by this picture, Fort William was still a post of some consequence as late as 1875.

Sir John Carling's party at the fort gate in 1879. In the centre is Wemyss Simpson, first Indian Commissioner to the Dominion Government. Sir John stands to the right of the gate with arm on fence.

the absorption of the North West Company into the Hudson's Bay Company.

The aftermath of the story is in the nature of an anti-climax. After 1821, the fur trade was diverted by the Hudson's Bay Company from Montreal to Hudson Bay, and the canoe route from Fort William to Montreal fell into comparative disuse. Fort William consequently sank into the category of a third-rate post. "We regretted to find," wrote the American Lieutenant Keating, when he visited Fort William in 1823, "that this establishment, which had cost a great deal of money, and had been embellished with many of the luxuries of civilized countries, is about to be suffered to fall to ruin; the change in the direction of the trade having made this a place of but very little importance."

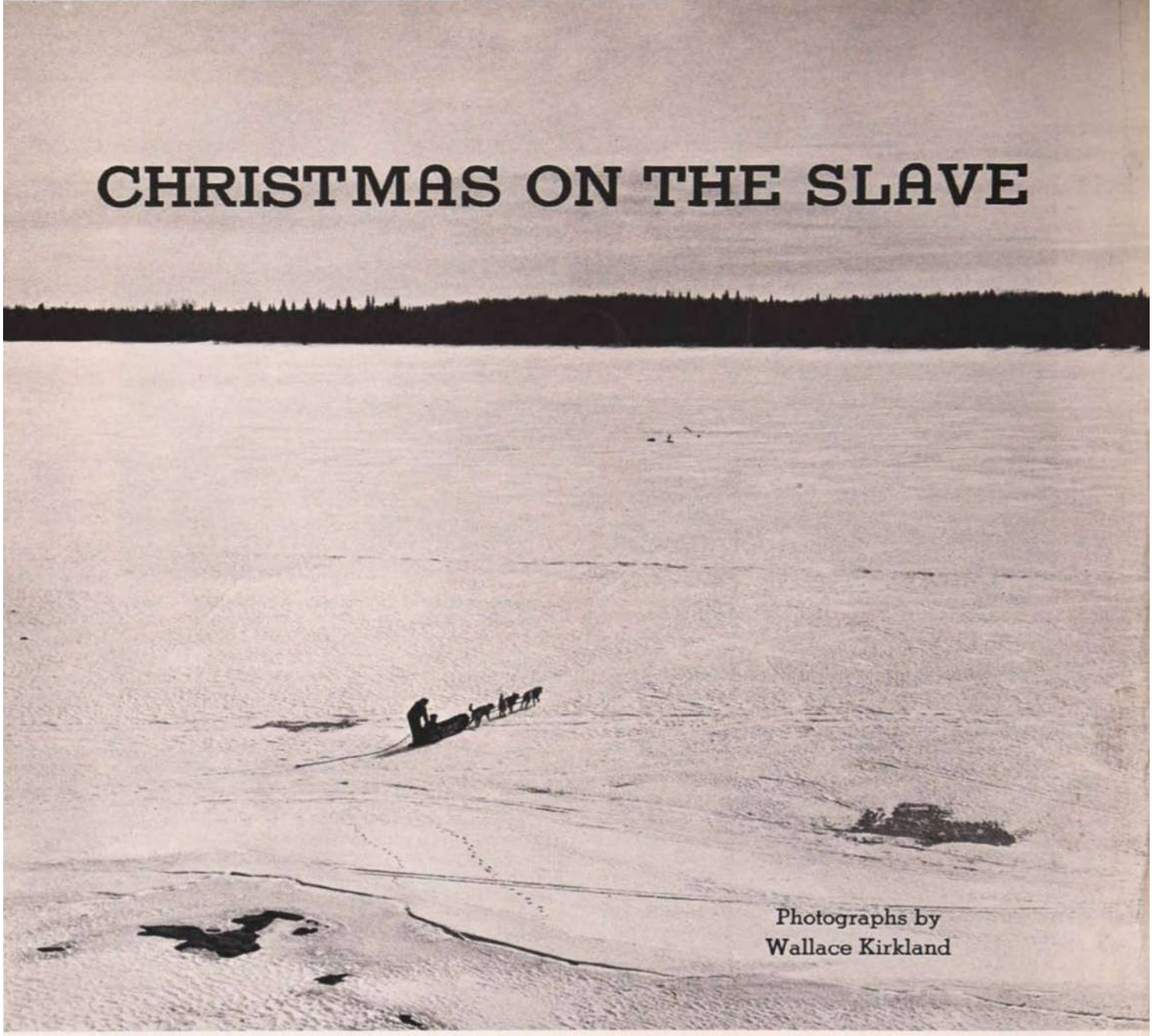
The decay of Fort William can be traced in the accounts of later visitors. When John McLean stopped there on his way to the West in 1833, he wrote, "We found the grand depot of the North West Company falling rapidly to decay, presenting in its present ruinous state but a shadow of departed greatness. It is now occupied as a petty post, a few Indians and a few old voyageurs being the sole representatives of the crowded throngs of former times." Ten years later Sir Henry Lefroy spent three days at Fort William, and he testifies in his *Autobiography* that "Fort William was even then but the shadow of its former self. . . . Extensive ranges of sheds and warehouses were falling into decay." When Washington Irving published *Astoria* in 1836, he wrote the epitaph of the post in these famous words:

"The feudal state of Fort William is at an end; its council chamber is silent and deserted; its banquet hall no longer echoes to the burst of loyalty, or the 'auld world' ditty; the lords of the lakes and forests have passed away."

The stone powder magazine, last remnant of the old fort, as it appeared in 1899. It was demolished about 1902. A. N. Mouat

Fort William, it is true, continued in existence as a trading post for another forty years. It was still in operation when Wolseley's Red River expedition stopped in 1870 at "Prince Arthur's Landing" on its way to Fort Garry, when Lord and Lady Milton spent some months in 1872 at Point de Meuron, and when Lord and Lady Dufferin paid a visit to the head of the lakes in 1874. But the coming of the railway (the first sod was turned at Fort William in 1872) sounded the knell of the fur trade; and when John McIntyre, who had been in charge at Fort William since 1855, retired in 1878, the post was closed. Five years later, in 1883, all but one of the buildings of the fort were levelled to make way for the Canadian Pacific Railway freight yards. Only the stone powder-magazine—known as the "Old Fort"—remained for a time, used by the railway as a storehouse. But it too has now disappeared, and nothing remains of the old capital of the North West Company except the street names of the modern city, which sound like a roll-call of the Nor'Westers.

CHRISTMAS ON THE SLAVE



Photographs by
Wallace Kirkland

A dog carriole sets out to cross the frozen Slave River at Fort Smith.

THE Slave River is a mighty stream which carries the waters of Lake Athabaska and the Peace River into Great Slave Lake. Some rivermen believe that the Slave for most of its way has been wrongly named—that it is really the Peace, joined by a short tributary from Lake Athabaska—and a glance at the map seems to support this view. Alexander Mackenzie, who first travelled its waters 160 years ago, remarked that at the junction of the two great rivers the Peace "assumes the name of the Slave River." And he added a footnote: "The Slave Indians, having been driven from their original country by their enemies, the Knisteneaux [Crees], along the borders of this part of the river, it received that title, though it by no means involves the idea of servitude, but was given to these fugitives as a term of reproach, that denoted more than common savageness."

Some seventy-five miles from the confluence, the Slave begins to tumble down a series of rapids. Canoes and York boats used to negotiate these falls fairly

Last day of school before the holidays! Children of various ages in the one-room school house at Fort Fitzgerald.

safely—though Cuthbert Grant, sr., who led the first party of white men down the river, lost five men and two canoes there in 1786 at a place that has ever since been known as the Rapids of the Drowned.

Needless to say, this series of rapids, in all some sixteen miles long, presents a complete barrier to navigation of the Slave by large boats; and since the first steamers plied the lower Slave and the Mackenzie, all cargoes have been portaged by road between the head of the rapids and the foot. As early as 1872 the Hudson's Bay Company had a post called The Rapids at the head of the white water. Two years later a post was built at the other end of the portage, just across the 60th parallel, and named Fort Smith after Donald A. Smith, Chief Commissioner for the Company in Canada; while the name of the upper post was changed to Smith's Landing. Finally, in honour of Insp. F. J. Fitzgerald, R.N.W.M.P., who died on duty with the Dawson Patrol in 1911, Smith's Landing was renamed Fort Fitzgerald.

These pictures were taken at both forts, Fitzgerald and Smith. Both these settlements can now look back on seventy-five years of continuous activity. Fitzgerald saw the coming of the first steamer in 1884, and Smith the building of the first steamboat on the lower river in 1885-6. Since then new steamers have come and old ones have gone, and much freight of an extraordinary variety has been hauled over the Smith portage in Red River ox carts, horse-drawn wagons, and motor trucks. But the Big Moment in the combined lives of the two rapids posts was undoubtedly the coming of the U.S. army engineers during the hectic days of the Canol Project. At that time the docks and the historic portage road between them swarmed with American troops, gigantic trailer-trucks, bull dozers, earth-moving machines, outsize tractors, and the tugs and barges which were hauled out of the Slave River at Fitzgerald and dumped into it again at Smith, sixteen miles further north. A new road was cut through the bush to accommodate the flow of traffic, and an airport was hacked out of the forest.

Now both places have resumed the uneven tenor of their peacetime ways, bustling with activity in the short summer of the 60th parallel, and taking life easy during the long cold winter.

At Christmas time the Indians come in to the posts to bring their furs and celebrate. Here the post manager at Fort Fitzgerald looks over a choice lot of foxes, while the owner waits in stolid silence to hear his offer.

The trapper, having paid his debt with the proceeds of the trade, invests part of the balance in the makings of a Christmas feast—and in some hardware which will indirectly provide more feasts in the months to come.

Christmas present for the post manager's son.

In the faces of these small ones at Fort Smith, the photographer has caught the solemn wonder of children at Christmas, the world over.

Sternwheelers and barges are laid up for the winter at Gravel Point shipyard. In the foreground are the marine superintendent and the post manager of Fort Smith.

In their snug living room, the Fort Smith post manager and his wife are secure against the northern winter.

For the Yuletide Feast

by Ruth Harvey
Illustrated by Barbara Cook

Nostalgic memories of a child's "world of wonders" in the old Winnipeg store of the Hudson's Bay Company

A chapter from the book Curtain Time, *"a saga of the greatest playhouse in the Canadian West," published in Canada by Thomas Allen Ltd., and in the United States by Houghton Mifflin Company.*

"Oh brave! Oh sweet bell! . . . When the pancake-bell rings, we are as free as my lord mayor; we may shut up our shops and make holiday. . . . I'll lead you to victuals.—The Shoemaker's Holiday.

THE fortnight just before Christmas was a slack time in the show business and many companies planned a lay-off then. People were too busy shopping and preparing for the holidays to go to the theatre. We went shopping, too, and the very best part of it was our special trip to the Hudson's Bay Company's store.

On most of our other visits there we used one of the entrances that gave on gloves and ribbons and purses and led to the elevators. That was nice, but it was—even with a detour to the toy department—like any other big shop. On our annual, pre-holiday expedition we passed and ignored this part of the store and went to the farthest end of the building before we entered. The doors we pushed open here were like all the others, but they seemed wider and loftier and I always thought of them as "portals," for they led into a world of wonders.

To step inside there on a December day, half blinded by the dazzle of sun on snow, was to be Ali Baba entering the vast gloom of the treasure cave. For a moment

I could see only dimly the laden shelves and counters. But even before my eyes had adjusted to the light my nostrils were aware of many odours—coffee, apples, warm bread, spices, tea and oranges, mingled with others pleasant but unidentifiable, in a symphonic smell of good food.

The food department of the Hudson's Bay Company's store was large, but it was not bright, obvious, and slickly hygienic as the big markets are now. It did not suggest a quick feed by fluorescent glare at an enamel-topped table in a corner of the kitchen, but rather, long feasts by candlelight at the knightly board. The dark wood in the long counters, in the high shelves lining the walls, in the ranks of cupboards and deep, mysterious bins, gave it a mellow, grand, baronial air.

Directly inside the door was the tobacco counter. In its glass showcase were pipes with bowls of richly polished bruyere or carved meerschaum, humidors and pouches, and gilt-edged playing cards. Ready, on the counter above, were tins and packets of fine cigarettes, canisters of tobacco, and wooden boxes displaying cigars like brown potentates' fingers, ringed in scarlet and gold or regally wrapped in entire robes of silver.

The counter was set just there, I suppose, for the convenience of the male customer, and it was symbolic. It dominated the place. A gentleman could step in from the street and buy his tobacco without having to make his way past the long aisles of kitchen supplies, yet in the short moment of his stay he could cast a lordly glance over the territory beyond.

"All this," the tobacco counter seemed to suggest, "is your domain, sir. The clerks busy at the shelves and the women shopping are minions intent on your comfort and pleasure."

If the gentleman glanced above the door, the coat-of-arms of the Company confirmed the suggestion. The four beavers sable on the shield and the two elks supporting it were explicit. "This extraordinary organization," they told him, "is a monument to male initiative and power."

"And all the agreeable perquisites thereof!" added the fox who formed the crest of the arms and was seated on a red cap trimmed with ermine, the heraldic symbol of sovereignty.

"This company," the fox continued, "was born in the minds of gentlemen smoking their long pipes and warming their silver-buckled shoes before the fire in a coffee house in London. It was chartered by King Charles and headed by Prince Rupert. It knows what a gentleman likes and what is his due. And thus in your service, sir, are the long winter trap-lines of the North, the pelt-laden sledges of the Eskimos dragging across the snow, the Indian canoes heavy with skins flowing with the spring-freed streams to Hudson's Bay. And the lonely trading posts there. And the ships that come to them, fighting the ice through the straits, to unload their cargoes of kettles and knives and blankets and bright cloth, and load again with furs and turn back to the straits. And all the other ships that join them on the sea, the ships going east with their bellies full of minerals and western wheat and coming back to provide you, sir, with comforts and sensual delights.

"In short, sir," concluded the fox, from his elegant perch on the ermined cap of maintenance, "with your dinner."

And the gentleman, like a prince pausing at the door to the kitchens on a royal tour of inspection, might take one more glance at the back of the store and one sniff of the perfumed promises wafted thence and so, stopping only to clip and light his cigar, go on his way.

Well, the gentleman might leave, content with one glimpse and one whiff, but wild horses could not have dragged me out. Or even hurried me on. Mamma and I moved with leisure from section to section. We did not rush along, seizing packages and piling them into a perambulator. In due time our purchases would be sent to the house in a sleigh drawn by a horse with jingling bells on its harness. At each department we sat down on the chairs there and mamma took out her list. The clerk displayed, measured, weighed, and suggested. And while mamma considered and made her selections, I had time, leaning back comfortably with my heels hooked over the rungs of the chair, to survey the laden shelves.

One of the first sections was almost like the toy department, for the merchandise was in miniature. Here were little packets of those wonderful tastes that were spread in the sandwiches at grownups' parties. And all the things an English cook used for savouries to serve at the end of a meal instead of a sweet dessert. Small jars of bloater paste, pink shrimp, lobster, anchovy, ham and turkey. Russian caviar that did not look nice and tasted just as bad, but was exotic to think about. Sardines, invisible in flat tins, but lying there, I knew, silvery in pools of amber oil. And *pate de foie gras* in shallow, yellow-glazed pots, each with a lid and a thin layer of creamy fat beneath it to protect the velvet *pate*.

By this time, although I had had a sound breakfast of oatmeal porridge, bacon and toast, I would begin to feel the faint symptoms of appetite, the little languor in the stomach followed by dreamy thoughts of food. "This state," Brillat Savarin says, "is not without its charms." Certainly I, with the visions actually before me, found it delightful and I turned to look at the neighbouring shelves.

Here were green olives, almost as big as plums, stuffed with pimentos and celery and nuts. Gherkins sweet and gherkins sour. Brown pickled walnuts. Chutneys, waiting in spiced splendour to be wedded to some prince of curries. Here were square jars of sulphur-coloured chow-chow, the kind that was very hot and very sour and that, when you spread it on bread, dripped through and made indelible stains on white middy blouses.

Here was horseradish in tall white bottles and capers in tall green bottles. Worcestershire sauce "from the recipe of a nobleman in the county." And all those other sauces the English invented to take your mind off the slabs of cold meat and the mounds of sodden vegetables. Sauces with labels that made you think of crotchety old gentlemen in London clubs and the story of the man who was black-balled from one of them and drummed out of his regiment with his epaulettes torn off, and whatever other humiliating things they do to those who disgrace the uniform, because he had taken mustard with his mutton.

A memory of last summer's sun seemed to haunt the shelves beyond, shining from the contents of the glass jars with jewel colours. Here were the jams, red raspberry and strawberry and cherry. Black-currant jam and tart gooseberry. Golden apricot and dark damson plum. Blackberry jam that was purple to see and purple to taste. Jams that made you think of English streams and hedges.

And from France, precious little jars of Bar-le-Duc: currants in ruby nectar, so good to eat with Neufchatel cheese.

And marmalades. Marmalades made in Scotland from Spanish oranges. Marmalades, in small grey stone jars, brown and deliciously bitter and chewy with peel. Marmalades in big gilt tins. Marmalades made of lemons and tangerines, with the fragrance of the fruit perpetuated by sugar. Marmalades that would slide from a spoon, light and clear and flecked delicately with shreds of peel.

And jellies. Crab apple and quince glowing in their glasses, pellucid jellies "soother than the creamy curd." Now there was a poem! The stupid person who made the illustration for it in *The Young Folk's Library* had painted Porphyro and Madeline stealing down the castle stairs, neglecting the stanza that described the best picture of all.

Oh, gladly would I sleep an azure-lidded sleep in blanched linen, smooth and lavender'd, if I could wake to see what Madeline saw: the candied fruits, the jellies, the lucent syrops, tinct with cinnamon. Poor Madeline—she was bustled off by Porphyro and Keats without having had a single taste. It was outrageous.

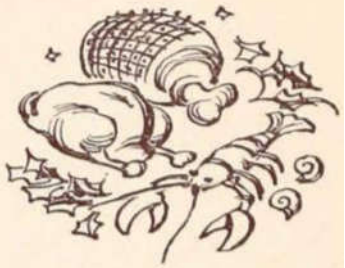
But mamma was not so unkind. She would always buy a jar of preserved ginger, a squatty blue Chinese jar bound and looped with raffia. And some honey —the pale golden syrup that would taste of clover and prairie roses, or one of the exquisite combs that made you feel wickedly destructive when you first broke into them, thinking of the long, precise industry of the bees.

Behind the next counters were glass-fronted bins of rice and beans and dried peas. There were coffee beans and green and black teas in enormous storage canisters. And little tin and lead caddies of tea scented with lemon or jasmine that the clerk lifted down reverently from the shelves.

Beyond were the cheeses. Huge cartwheels of yellow Canadian cheese and smaller disks of white cheese made by the Trappist monks in a prairie monastery twenty miles away—the kind Schumann-Heink liked so much. Silver packages of snowy Neufchatel, and Maclaren's, orange, soft and mealy, packed in blue-white china jars. Here were green-veined Roqueforts and Gorgonzolas, looking geological from their long sojourn in the caves, chubby red Dutch cheeses, and English Cheddars and Stiltons.

It was a Stilton that papa had used for his great experiment. He had bored holes in it, filled them with port wine, and set the cheese away on a high shelf to ripen. Just after that we had all left on a month's holiday. When we came back mamma took one step inside the kitchen door and stopped. "Something," she cried in a Mrs. Siddons voice, "has died here!" High and low we searched for a carcass. We found nothing, and mamma sent for a carpenter. He traced the smell to the long pantry. "A rat," he said, "under the floor." He was just ripping up the first of the floor boards when papa strolled in and took one deep, enraptured sniff. "Ah," he said, "I believe my cheese is exactly ripe."

At the back of the store were the poultry, fish and meats. Here we passed the red salmon, the finnan haddie, the mammoth rib roasts of beef and saddles of mutton, to contemplate the plump geese and capons. Sometimes we toyed with the idea of having one at Christmas, just for novelty, but we always ended by ordering a turkey. There was nothing like a big, high-bosomed turkey for Christmas dinner. Turkey and all the trimmings for the far-from-home theatre people who might be our guests. I let mamma decide which bird to choose—it could be admired later as it browned and glazed in the oven and filled the house with a gust of fragrance at every basting—and I went on to the bakery department.



The good things that went with English tea were here: scones, crumpets, muffins, Bath buns. There were round loaves of cottage bread, each with a baby loaf on its back, like duck-on-a-rock. There was the mealy brown bread papa liked. Sometimes he would take two slices of it with an apple to the office for his lunch. He would always exhibit this small package, making a great show of his austerity. And it did seem like a meager lunch—until you remembered that he had fruit and oatmeal and buckwheat cakes and maple syrup and sausages and coffee for his breakfast.

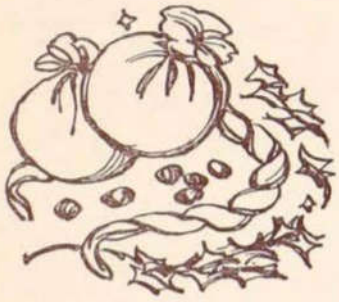
Next to the new-baked goods was one of the best departments of all: the biscuits. Here were the everyday biscuits and the special-treat biscuits. The bins behind the counter held the ordinary ones: social teas, fig newtons, oval arrow-roots for the nursery, raisin biscuits and ginger snaps. But on the shelves above were tins of plumcake and shortbread from Edinburgh, and boxes and boxes of the very finest biscuits from England. They were packed for the colonies; boxed in tin and soldered tight against heat and cold and damp. From England they went by ship over the globe, to all the big red splashes on the map and all the tiny red pinpricks dotting the blue expanses of the oceans. To Chesterfield Inlet, to Bulawayo, to Simla, to Singapore. Every moment, I knew, of my day and night, it was tea time some place or other in the Empire. People were warming the pot, measuring the tea leaves, pouring on the boiling water, and perhaps while the tea steeped, opening a box of biscuits like these.

It was fascinating to open one. Under the snug tin cover the box was sealed with another sheet of tin that could be cut with the tine of a fork or with a little opener that sometimes came with the box. When you tore off this tin wrapping and lifted the thick sheets of waxed paper beneath it, there were the biscuits. Little rounds and ovals, squares and diamonds. Some shaped like coronets or like beehives. Some filled with fondant. Each sort separated from the others by paper frills as crimped as the ruffles of a regency dandy.

To us in Canada they were delicious, the best of their kind. But to Britishers in the remote outposts they must have been more than a good product. At tea—the best and the most English of all English meals—it must have been pleasant to have them. For though the strawberries might be missing, the Devonshire cream and the crumpets, here, at least, were the English biscuits, as crisp and fresh as if it were home.

England had done handsomely by her brewers and her soapmakers: they had been wafted up to the peerage as if on clouds of lather and froth. But I felt keenly that these bakers had served the Empire even better, and I hoped there had been some biscuit barons in the honours list on the King's birthday.

As we had almost circled the store now, we came to some of those things whose scents had greeted us when we entered. Here were barrels of apples, crates of oranges and tangerines, and brown Spanish casks full of grapes packed in crumbled cork: malagas as cool as jade, and great hothouse clusters that were deep purple beneath a frosty bloom.

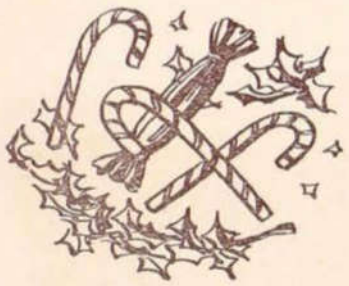


Here, too, were the dried fruits, the raisins, currants, cherries, citron and angelica for the Christmas cakes and puddings. Mamma had bought her supply of these on an earlier expedition, and our Christmas cakes had been made. Everyone in the house had stirred a wish into them before they were put in the oven to bake for hours. Then, for two or three days they had stood on trays in the pantry while juice from preserved cherries and plums was poured over them and allowed to soak in. Finally they had been bathed in brandy and now, blanketed under an inch of almond paste, they were dozing boozily in the fruit cellar.

Today we would buy clusters of table raisins to nibble and almonds and walnuts to crack lazily at the end of dinner, when appetite had changed to a feeling of obesity, but the hand was still moving automatically to the mouth, *allargando*, like a metronome running down.

Here, too, we ordered our Christmas candies and it was hard to choose. There were bright marzipan fruits, *langues de chat* in flat boxes, silver-wrapped sweet chocolate tied with bright ribbons, yellow twists of barley sugar, butterscotch wafers and rum toffee. Dangling from a wire hung above the counter were the red-and-white peppermint canes for the Christmas tree, and small plum puddings looking like fat friars in their brown or white cloth sacks. In *Mother Goose* there was a rhyme about a king "who stole three pecks of barley meal to make a bag pudding." It must have been larger than these, for

> The King and Queen did eat thereof,
> And all the court beside;
> And what they did not eat that night
> The Queen next morning fried.



Like mush, I supposed. It made the family life of ancient English royalty seem so cozy, and I longed to taste one of these little puddings. But mamma scorned them because they were boiled instead of steamed. For our own pudding she bought here a set of good luck charms: a ring, a thimble, a threepenny bit, a donkey and a four-leafed shamrock.

And then we came to the most festive and exciting of all these special, holiday things: the crackers. Some of them were magnificent, with gilt or silver trimming on the coloured crepe paper. Some were decorated with artificial flowers or tinsel butterflies for the ladies to pin on their dresses or wear in their hair. But that was only the outside. A small label on the end of each box told what was inside the crackers: caps, charms, fake jewelry, conundrums, jokes or epigrams. Sometimes there were several prizes in each.

Oh, what delight—before the turkey was brought on—to find your cracker! What excitement to pull it with your neighbour, getting your fingers firmly on the snapper and making a terrific bang! And then the unwrapping, the unfolding of the paper caps that might be crowns or baby bonnets. And after the caps were

put on, everyone read the joke or the riddle he had found. The epigrams were cribbed from Voltaire and Lord Chesterfield, and sometimes the riddles were pedantic. I remember one that sounded as if it had been made up by some waggish don: "Why is a misogynist like an epithalamium?" But most were better suited to the varied ages of a Christmas family party. Merriment would dent two dimples high in my little cousin's cheeks as she read hers: "Why does a sculptor die a horrible death?" "Why?" we would all ask, and shout with laughter at the answer: "Because he makes faces and busts!"

When we had chosen our box of crackers we came to the last stop, the department where the wines and liquors were sold. These shelves had a regimental look, with the bottles all in line, shoulder to shoulder, like soldiers on the parade ground. They were not, I thought, so beautiful as the shelves of jellies, for here dark glass often hid the colours of the wines. And my palate was too young to appreciate the contents. But as mamma ordered, the names took on an aura of festivity. First, claret for the holiday dinners. Even the children would have a few drops of claret in their glasses—enough to make the water a faint pink and to make us feel regal. Then brandy, to put around the pudding and set alight. And sherry, to serve to callers and to put in the grownups' pudding sauce. Children had lemon sauce, but at about twelve years it was possible to graduate to a small helping of the grownups' nectar, silky smooth with eggs, heavenly sweet with sugar, and divinely fiery with sherry.

And now mamma asked for rum. That was for past Christmas, for New Year's Day. It would go into the punch bowl with brandy and lemons and sugar and spices and hot water. New Year's Day was a grand day, the end of the holidays but the beginning of something new. The first page of an unread book, promising and mysterious. You began it with a fine feeling of virtue, exalted by resolutions to practice the piano more than one hour every day and sternly to conquer the Latin gerund and gerundive. Of course, you would not have to start this until the next day: New Year's Day was too busy. The close family warmth of Christmas expanded now to include all old friends, in laughter, joviality and a confirmation of fellowship. From early afternoon until well into the evening all the men in town went on a round of calls. They paid their respects to the Crown at the Lieutenant-Governor's official reception and then went from house to house of friends, where the women were ready with their dining tables spread with sandwiches and cakes and tea and coffee and punch. When I saw the bottle of rum on the counter I thought of the fine smell our punch bowl would have. And I thought of Mr. Barley.

For as long as I could remember I had seen Mr. Barley on New Year's afternoon. He never patronized me when I was little or was archly teasing when I was in my early teens. He talked to me just as he did to papa and mamma, and at six, at eleven, I looked forward to his New Year's call.

He was a small, slender man and the years did not change him much, except that he grew more frail and his blond hair and moustache paled with the white hairs in them. As he grew older he came earlier and stayed later at our house. He had not the strength to make the usual great round of calls, and year by year death made its cancellations on his calling list. So, sometimes as early as two o'clock the bell would ring, and when I ran to the door and opened it, Mr. Barley would blow in like a stray brown cocoon on the gust of below-zero air. I would take his beaver coat, his fur cap and his gauntlets, and we would settle him in an armchair by the fire with his punch. He would wrap his fingers about the mug to warm them. His hands were slender and the veins showed green-blue on the pale, freckled skin. He would sniff the punch, and smile, and sip.

"Very warming, very fortifying!" he would say contentedly. Then, lighting the first of a chain of cigarettes, he would talk about the theatre and the shows he had liked. He would tell us about his reading, his latest phonograph records. He had a love for French writers and French music.

"That fellow Anatole France!" He would shake his head in admiration. "You'll enjoy him when you are old enough. And that fellow Verlaine!"

He would tell us about a new song, singing it more with the left hand that sketched the melodic line than with the breath of a voice that chanted the words:

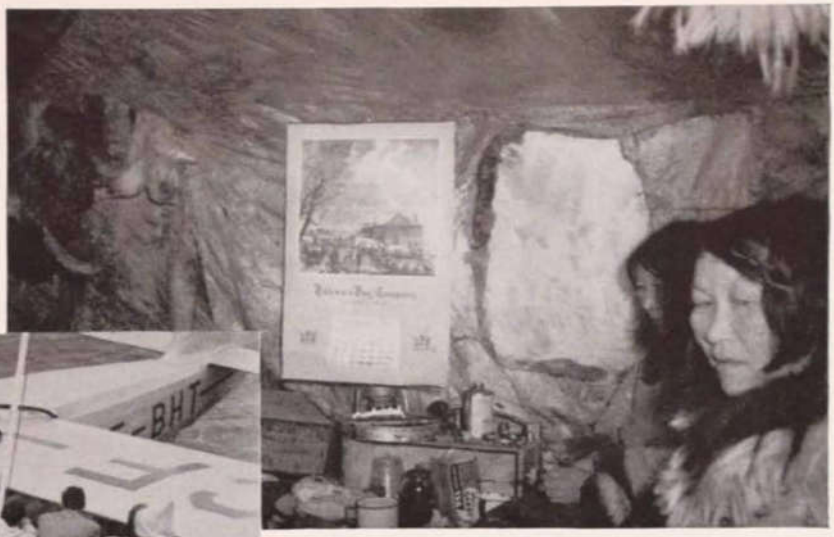
Le temps des lilas et le temps des roses est passe.
Le temps des oeillets aussi . . .

And then, while we were busy with other callers, he would take a cat nap, waking for a little more punch and more talk. . . .

So the clerk wrote the order, set aside the bottle. "Hudson's Bay Company . . . Rum . . . Overproof," it said on the label—a bottle of New Year's Day! Old friends and their greetings, pleasant talk, laughter, fruitcake, a fine feeling of virtue, and dear Mr. Barley, and that fellow Verlaine.

Mamma checked her list. Yes, with the rum, everything was ticked off. She folded the slip of paper and put it away in her purse. I buttoned my grey lamb coat, tightened the red wool sash around it, and pulled on my mittens. Now I was impatient to get away. I felt as if I had walked around the world, and the little languor in my stomach was a pang of starvation. As I hurried mamma to the door, I would look up at the coat-of-arms. The little fox had a smug look, I thought, as if he had just licked his chops.

Here and There



Right: Hudson's Bay calendars are found in some of the most out-of-the-way places. Here is one of last year's hanging up in an Eskimo's caribou-skin tent. To the right of it is the ice window and below it a seal oil lamp, ready lit to boil water for that Fort Garry tea (q.v.). J. H. Webster

The Company Norseman BHT refuels in the Arctic from the new Company supply ship "Rupertsland" making her maiden northern voyage this year. To the right is the "Rupertsland" discharging cargo at Cape Smith. J.W.A.

Opposite the entrance to Beaver House, the Company's headquarters in London, a triangular piece of waste land has been converted by the Company into a garden for public use. Here the Governor (hands behind back) officially opens it on September 28. The site was presented by the Corporation of London, who will ultimately be responsible for its maintenance.

William John Macdonald, author of the reminiscences, with his wife Flora, whom he marrried in 1857. She was the daughter of Capt. James Reid of the brigantine "Vancouver." From a picture owned by Miss Burns.

VICTORIA in the 1850's

by Flora Hamilton Burns

Reminiscences of a young Scot who came out to Fort Victoria a century ago.

SHORTLY after the British Crown granted to the Hudson's Bay Company in 1849 the exclusive trading and colonization rights over the territory of Vancouver Island, the Hon. Edward Ellice, M.P., a director, offered a commission in the Company's service on Vancouver Island to William John Macdonald, son of his friend, Captain Alexander Macdonald of Vallay, North Uist, and Glendale, Isle of Skye.

William Macdonald was born November 29th, 1832, received his education under private tutors, and in November 1850, at the age of 18, he left Scotland for London to take up his appointment. He kept a diary, and prefaced his recapitulation of it with the words: "The events of my early life will not be of much interest to strangers, and perhaps no part will be." However, the portions dealing with his early life are full of interest, and the following extracts from his years with the Company, 1850-1858, provide many sidelights on people and events in Victoria a century ago:

On my arrival in the city I went direct to the Hudson's Bay Offices, Fenchurch Street, to report to Mr. Barclay, the head Secretary, who received me cordially, and secured a room for me at the *George and Vulture Hotel*. Next I went to Favel and Bonsfield, outfitters, to purchase an outfit for my long voyage. Previous to embarking I met Captain William Mitchell, to be fellow passenger, coming to Victoria to take command of the steamer *Beaver*. Also I met John M. Wark, a clerk in the service, coming out. [He was stationed at Fort Simpson, Cariboo and Victoria respectively, died in 1909, leaving a wife and family.]

At the end of November I embarked on the slow, old-fashioned barque *Tory*, 500 tons, Captain Duncan, who had his wife on board. She had a piano with her, was plain looking, wore curls and squinted. Robert Williams, first mate, a good natured man who sang well; Herbert Lewis, second mate, not so agreeable, and Jay, third mate. Captain James Cooper, supercargo, with his young wife, and George Johnston, surgeon, were on board. Also Richard Gollege, a clerk, who wrote a beautiful hand, and became secretary to Mr. Douglas, Chief Factor.

Our ship was towed down to Gravesend, where Captain Langford, wife and five daughters came on board. Captain Pelly, ship's husband, and W. G. Smith, assistant secretary, Hudson's Bay House, came on an inspection visit before the ship sailed. Mr. Smith thoughtfully placed £10 in my hand on sailing. The Langfords brought a mastiff dog and a goat on board.

In the first cabin, 21 of us, in the second cabin, 30, and in the steerage, 90 labouring men and families. Miss Cameron, fresh from school, a niece of Mr. Douglas, was on board, and W. H. Newton, one of the Langford party, who married the eldest daughter of John Tod, Chief Trader in the service of the Hudson's Bay Company. He was taken into the service and died at Fort Langley. Among those in the second cabin were Mr. and Mrs. Blinkhorn and Miss Ella (daughter), then fourteen years old.

Soon after putting to sea we encountered severe gales, chiefly in the Bay of Biscay. Close reefed topsails for days, green seas washing over us. This delay caused an apprehension as to the scarcity of food, water and stores generally, which determined the Captain and supercargo to put into Saint Iago, in the Cape de Verdes, off Portugal, and belonging to that country. Here we obtained supplies of different kinds. Our ladies and others of us who were anxious to land did so. Our boats could not safely touch the beach, owing to the heavy surf, and we had to be carried by coloured natives to land. All of us young men secured saddle horses and rode off to the country, a beautiful ride through vineyards, orange groves and tropical

foliage, which we enjoyed exceedingly after being cooped on shipboard for nearly a month. Had dinner at the Central Hotel, then off to our ship in a large lighter laden with stores, and a crew of dusky men. Our position was far from safe with a head swell, and two of our passengers, having imbibed rather freely, quarrelled with the crew.

On leaving the Cape de Verdes we soon got to the tropics—trade winds, calms, and beautiful weather, rain occasionally, and a burning sun, our companions being porpoises and flying fish. I enjoyed being soused in the wash deck in early mornings. Mrs. Duncan having a piano, and Aubrey Dean, a second class passenger, having a metal flute, we had dances after dinner, on the quarter deck. As we neared the Falkland Islands the weather became much cooler, gales, rain, thunder and lightning. Very stormy off the River de la Plata.

Here we enter on 1851. Sailing south with a strong head wind, snow and hail, going to 63 degrees south in trying to round Cape Horn. After getting into the the Pacific Ocean our voyage was uneventful, no ships met, no land sighted. Our food, by this time three months out, became bad and scarce, cheese and biscuits full of weevils, water scarce and putrid part of the time. After water is some time in tanks or barrels it becomes putrid and smells offensively, but after a time clarifies. Very monotonous sailing week after week without seeing any signs of life besides some birds and porpoises.

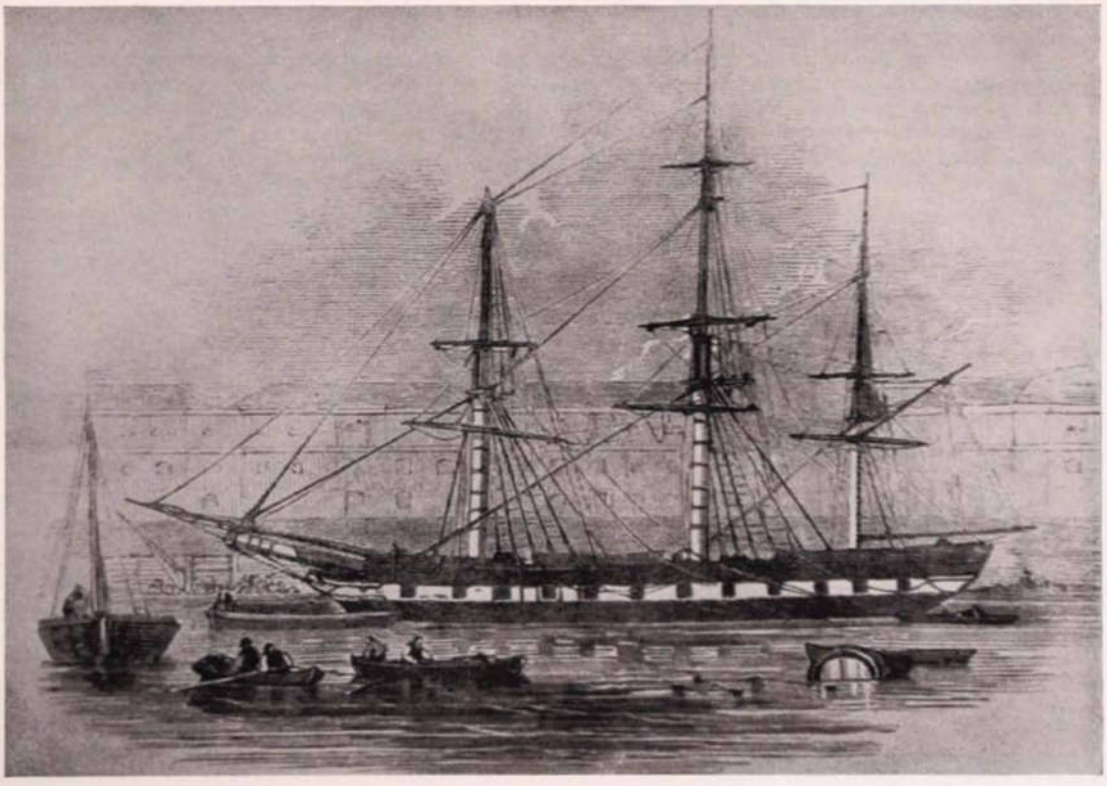
Arrived at Victoria, Vancouver Island, 14th May, 1851. Although the voyage was long and tedious I had no wish to leave the ship and so many friends, made on our long voyage. However, the next morning, after anchoring, Mr. Douglas, Chief Factor in charge, sent Mr. George Simpson in a large canoe manned by Indians, to take me on shore. On landing walked up the Fort to the Mess Hall where I was met by Mr. Douglas and Mr. R. Finlayson, who gave me a cordial welcome; had early dinner, as the custom was, enjoyed the change of food from the ship—mutton, fish, grouse, etc., and fresh vegetables.

After dinner John Ogilvy, a stalwart young clerk in the service, brought two horses round to the hall, and off we went for a scamper round Beacon Hill and Clover Point, which I enjoyed immensely. Wild clover over those parts a foot high. Milk and butter in abundance, the Company having a dairy of one hundred cows on the hill [where the Cathedral later stood].

The Langford family occupied a small log house outside the Fort, where the first white boy in Victoria was born—George Langford. Six hundred acres of land were allotted to Captain Langford at Colwood, to establish a sheep farm. Here he built a house to which he removed his family, where they lived in comfort for some years, but the farming did not succeed. The eldest daughter, a first-class piano player, married Captain Joslin of the Navy. The second daughter married Captain Lewis of the Hudson's Bay Company, and the third married Mr. Bull of the Navy.

After a few days' rest, I was installed in the Company's chief office, with Chief Factor Finlayson. At this time there were no houses outside the Fort, all the officers and men, about seventy in all, lived inside the Fort, gates locked every night and watchmen set.

"The slow old-fashioned barque 'Tory'," on which W. J. Macdonald sailed round the Horn to Victoria. B.C. Archives.



In the month of June I was sent to San Juan Island to establish a salmon fishery, starting in a canoe, with an Indian crew, Joseph W. McKay [a chief trader and first discoverer of coal and gold on Vancouver Island] as pilot and locator of a site, and four French Canadian workmen. We selected a small sheltered bay, erected a rough shed for salting, packing and canning of salmon.

This year being a short run of fish, only 60 barrels of salmon were cured. The first month on this Island I lived under a very primitive, rough shelter—four posts stuck in the ground with a cedar bark roof—and wolves used to prowl round us all night. My men soon built a house for me of rough logs, with bedstead and table of the same, and as the Hudson's Bay Company always furnished plenty of blankets, I had a very comfortable bed. Soon the old schooner *Cadboro*, Captain Dixon, came into our little bay with different kinds of supplies. I removed my quarters to her, and after a month we came back to Victoria and I went back to office work.

Every Saturday after one o'clock all work ceased, some of us riding out by Cedar Hill or Cadboro Bay, or canoeing to Esquimalt or up the Arm.

The end of this year Dr. J. S. Helmcken came down from Fort Rupert to Victoria, where he continued to reside as medical man to the Company's officers and men. He was a kind hearted, generous man, always willing to help others, never asked for a fee for professional services. He was a man of ability and acted as Speaker for the Legislative Assembly for many years.

1852—The winter of this year Captain James Murray Reid, in command of the Brigantine *Vancouver*, arrived with his wife and three daughters. Mr. Williams, who was first officer of the *Tory*, was first officer of the *Vancouver*.

On a voyage to Port Simpson (in August, 1854), Mr. Swanson, as pilot, taking the outside route in rounding Queen Charlotte Islands to make Fort Simpson, they were wrecked on Rose Spit or Sands. The ship had a valuable cargo on board and some barrels of rum. The Indians being fierce and savage, began pillaging, so Captain Reid and Swanson thought it wise to burn the ship, which they did. This so enraged the Indians that they threatened the life of the white men, but on promise of compensation an amicable settlement was reached. This catastrophe was a sad thing for Captain Reid. No ship, no pay, with a wife and family to support and a home to build for them, but he did not lose heart, and went into the mercantile business on his own account.

1853—This year the ship *Norman Morison* arrived from London with a mail and supplies of all kinds, and bringing Mr. Kenneth Mackenzie, wife and family, and forty mechanics and labourers and their families; also Mr. Thomas Skinner, wife and family, with a like complement of men. The former took up 640 acres, known as "Craigflower," built a dwelling, men's houses and barns and stables, commenced farming, but did not succeed. The latter took up 640 acres, known as Constance Farm, went through the same operation and failure. Had these farms produced largely, there was no market, there not being more than 200 white people in the whole colony.

1855—The Russian war going on but very meagre news of what was going on in the Crimea. Two British ships, the *Pique* and *President*, with Admiral Evans, went north to Petropaulovski [in Siberia] to attack a small Russian settlement, accompanied by two French ships . . . . The incident of the ships going north led to the establishment of Esquimalt as a naval station.

Mr. Douglas this year erected two buildings to be used as hospitals in case of wounded men coming in.

1856—An Indian shot a white shepherd. The tribe refusing to give him up, an expedition was organized to proceed to Cowichan to arrest and punish the guilty man. Captain Houston, with the sloop of war *Trincomalee*, the *Otter* with Mr. Douglas, Captain Mouat; myself as Captain of Militia, with fifty men. On landing we were met by 200 armed Indians, with their faces blackened, who danced and shouted in front of us. We marched on, not taking notice of the Indian demonstration, halted at a fine plateau of grass and oak trees, and told the Indians we were to remain until the guilty man was given up. Soon he was led up by the tribe, was captured, tried and punished.

In addition to office duty I had to train and organize a body of 50 armed men to guard the Coast from the depredations of the Northern Indians, who used to land on their way home and shoot cattle.

1857—This was a momentous year for me, having married Catherine Balfour Reid, second daughter of Captain James Murray Reid. We lived in a home built by me, called "Glendale Cottage." Cost me about $5,000.

At the end of this year gold was discovered on the banks of the Thompson River. Many of the sailors of the Company's vessels deserted for the mines. The news of this discovery spread far and wide . . . . consequently a gold fever set in in the spring and summer of 1858.

1858—In the spring and summer of this year our small community was augmented by an invasion of about 35,000 persons, from the United States chiefly, but also from many other countries. Many of them splendid, hardy men composed of miners, mechanics, doctors, lawyers, and many idlers. No houses, no food

View of Victoria in July 1858, published by the Victoria "Gazette." Fort Victoria is seen near the centre, surrounded by a palisade, with the

or supplies for so many people. Meantime they sought shelter as best they could. Fortunately it was summer time and they could camp in the open fields. Before many weeks passed vessels arrived from San Francisco with mining supplies, sawn timber, canvas, cotton and food of all kinds. Soon there was a cotton or a canvas town—restaurants, shops and dwellings. Many buying town lots, then selling for $50 and $100, and building on them. Victoria began to have the appearance of a town, and regular streets. A few of the working men of the Company had small log houses outside the Fort, which may have cost them about $100 cash, and they woke up in the morning to be offered $5,000 and $7,000 for their holdings. All readily sold their property, and the free use of strong drink was too much for them. In a short time all were poor as before and many had died. They were principally French Canadians—first class workmen, if kept sober.

In the rising town water was very scarce, the chief supply being at Spring Ridge, about a mile from Government Street. It was carted in 90 gallon hogsheads, and delivered at one dollar each. Some people dug wells, were supplied that way. After a time water was laid on in wooden pipes, chiefly for fire purposes, tanks being dug at the intersection of streets. The men who came from San Francisco being used to frequent disastrous fires in that town, organized fire companies, purchased their own apparatus, gave their time gratuitously, which proved a great boom to the young town, on many occasions saving it from destruction. At this time there was no organized City authority, the Colonial Government looking after streets, drains, etc. No attempt at sewerage for many years.

A free port prevailed—an importer could land to any value by paying one dollar permit. Extensive importers were much surprised to know they could import to any amount for so insignificant a fee. The idea of a Free Port was to establish an emporium for British goods on the Pacific Coast, but it proved a failure, as the Pacific Coast merchants could import direct from Europe, and bond their goods. . . . Seeing the failure of a Free Port, a duty of 12% was levied.

I was worked very hard this year. Men being scarce, I was put to do many jobs—as Collector of Customs and Postmaster, then Gold Commissioner, issuing Mining Licenses. A guard ship being anchored in the mouth of the Fraser River, no miners could pass up without showing a license. Then I was commissioner, road commissioner and Captain of Militia. In the clerical part of this work I was greatly assisted by my wife and her sister, Mary Ann. No printing to be had in those days.

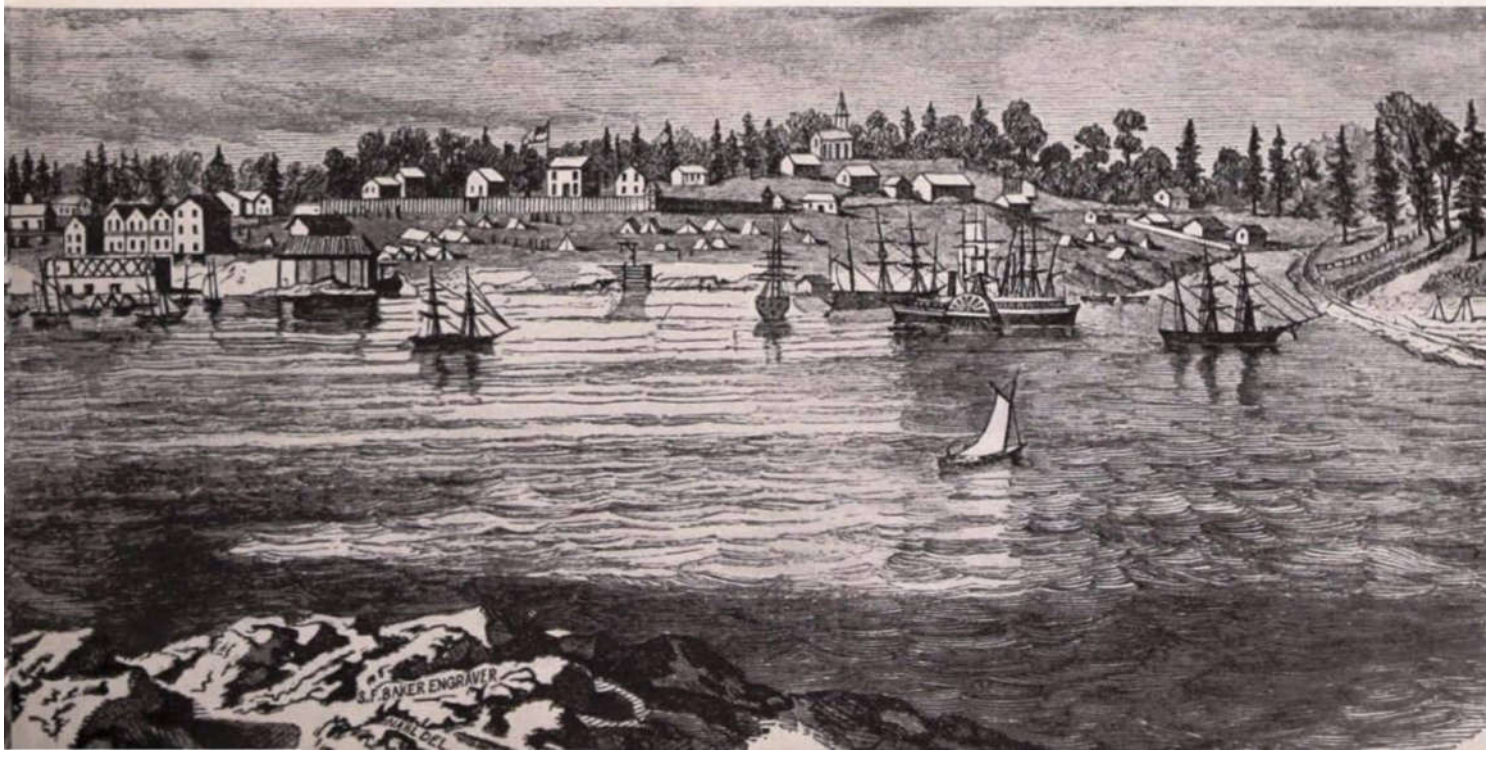
Mr. Douglas relieved me of some of those duties, giving Mr. Alex. Anderson, an old friend and Hudson's Bay Chief Trader, the position of Collector of Customs.

At the end of this year I retired from the service of the Hudson's Bay Company, and joined Captain Reid in the mercantile business.

It would be ungrateful of me to pass over without mention my Masters for eight years. I consider Chief Factor James Douglas and Chief Trader Roderick Finlayson [their then titles] as honourable, considerate gentlemen; treating a large number of men under them with kindness and consideration. In severing my connection with the Hudson's Bay Company, I am glad to be able to say that I carried with me their good wishes, although Mr. Douglas tried to induce me to remain in the service.

So, at the age of twenty-six, matured by varied experiences and responsibilities, William Macdonald entered upon another phase of his career. Twice mayor of Victoria, member of the Legislative Assembly and Legislative Council of the Crown Colonies of Vancouver Island and British Columbia, respectively, within thirteen years of leaving the Company's service, he was called to the Senate in 1871, when British Columbia "attained its majority" and entered confederation as the sixth province in the newly formed Dominion of Canada.

tents of miners bound for the Fraser River in front. On the right is James Bay, where the Empress Hotel now stands. One of the steamers is presumably the "Beaver." The proportions of the buildings, etc., are on the whole inaccurately shown. B.C. Archives.



FLYING SANTA CLAUS

Story and Photos
by Margaret Vollmer

Christmas comes a little late to the Indians north of the Albany, but it comes on wings.

THERE is only one bed in Webequa, Ontario, a village of four hundred people. This little fact is easier to understand when you discover that Webequa is nearly two hundred unmapped spruce-forest miles north of the northern C.N.R. track. To bring the massive wooden double bed to Webequa, the Ojibway Indian villagers had to haul its unwieldy weight by canoe and hump it over forty-one portages from Pagwa on the C.N.R. After all this sweating, the bed is only used once or twice a year, for it was brought in as a gesture of friendship and hospitality to Archdeacon Neville Clarke.

I first met this tall northern Anglican minister when he was living at Nakina, Ontario, which is on the map. Webequa is not. Stretching north from Nakina to the west side of James and Hudson Bays are the 60,000 square miles of his parish, pierced by neither railway nor roads. After a 1600-mile parochial junket by airplane I knew why the Webequa Indians would so honour Neville Clarke. I witnessed a flying Santa Claus.

Canon Clarke's route in Flossie the Fairchild is shown by the broken line. Map by courtesy of "The Northland."

Perhaps the only Canadian to put wings on Christmas, Mr. Clarke in 1947 invited me to accompany him on this annual trip through the back reaches of unmapped Northern Ontario by chartered bush plane. I was smug in the knowledge that I would be the first white woman to visit some points on the itinerary, but the Archdeacon (then Canon) could not tell me where we were going exactly. His route depended upon the location of the Indian parishioners' encampments. The Ojibways do not stay on reservations but nomadically wander from summer fishing grounds to winter traplines and hunting camps. Our signposts would be dogteam tracks; our destinations heralded by smoke from cabins and tents.

For an over-all picture the minister spread out aerial maps and hydrographic surveys of the lands draining into the west side of James Bay. Three main rivers trisect this huge watershed—the Albany, the Attawapiskat and the Winisk. North of the Albany the maps petered out, and travellers were left with hydrographic surveys which became sketchier the farther north one looked. A footnote on them was somewhat vague: "Areas indicated by dotted lines are from explorer's notes and not necessarily accurate." Three days later I observed the mapping fallacies in giant aerial panorama. Blank whiteness on a hydrographic survey could contain a multitude of lakes when one penetrated the area.

I did not worry about it, although our plane had no radio. We had a compass and Elmer Ruddick, our pilot, "knew the way." In the North your faith in a bush pilot is second only to your faith in the Almighty.

December 26, 1947, in Nakina was grey-cold with snow. Into "Flossie," a Fairchild 7-1 veteran of half-a-million aerial miles, we crammed our gear. A weird assortment went aboard—plumber's defrosting blow-pots, oil drums, snowshoes, sleeping bags, tarpaulins, grub and emergency grub. On top were shoved bushel baskets of tangerines, bulky crates of toys, and big boxes of candies, all donated to make Christmas real in the North. The load left barely enough room for Canon Clarke and myself to perch amidships on a box marked "dynamite detonators." Much to my relief I discovered that it was the grub box.

"We'll see the Baxters on Washi Lake first," shouted Neville Clarke above the revving motor roar. Up ahead, the barely visible peak of Elmer's parka nodded. With a swoosh of the wide skis, the emergency Trans-Canada Airlines' strip at Nakina was left behind for the steady plugging, "low and slow" of bush flight.

The average Canadian thinks of Canada's bush in its summer technicolour—a trillion green trees, gunmetal lakes, caramel muskeg and tourist-postcard blue skies. In winter the picture reverts to black and white. Under dim grey clouds, the trees glower darkly, the lakes are milky blobs splattered everywhere. Only the sinister licorice black of the "open water" rapids has a sharpness.

Miss Vollmer regards with a wary eye a couple of unchained sled dogs who have just finished a three-day journey bringing furs to Lansdowne House. Flossie made the same trip in an hour.

After an hour's flight north we saw the long marching Albany River below us, a giant white snake. It gave a twist to widen into Washi Lake. Circling low, peering for smoke or canvas in the shoreline trees, we spotted the camp. Gently we slid down until the shadow of the plane on the ice joined its skis with the reality of Flossie landing.

Canon Clarke jumped down and was greeted uproariously by patriarch George Baxter, his daughters, daughters-in-law and flocking grandchildren. Feeling like a Hollywood version of an Indian trader, I gave strings of bright beads to the womenfolk. Several of them were carrying on their backs the gaily painted and carved *tickinaguns*, or cradle boards.

George led us to his tent, the biggest of the half-dozen pitched under the snow-heavy trees. Inside the floor was a foot-deep layer of spruce boughs, which are refreshed periodically. Red-tasselled snowshoes, and an otter pelt drying on a whittled board, hung from the ridgepole. The women phlegmatically sitting on their heels, and the children scrambling with the toys made everything feel crowded, although the only furniture was a battered oil drum stove and wooden box table.

After the Communion plate and wine had been thawed out on the stove, Canon Clarke was ready to begin the service. It was a mélange of sounds which grew familiar as the week slipped by at camp after camp. A weird wailing chant droned out to reveal itself as "O Come All Ye Faithful" sung in Ojibway. Then came the devout ritual, the prayers to Kichi Manitou, all led by Canon Clarke in the baffling guttural monosyllables. Christmas came to Washi, as it would come all over the North, with gifts and worship.

As we flew on west, the albino serpentine Albany curled into Lake Eabamet. There, Fort Hope was comparative civilization, boasting an Anglican mission and summer school, a Roman Catholic mission and the familiar red and white Hudson's Bay post. We dug up the old chestnut of H B C signifying "Here Before Christ."

Jack Tyrer, the H B C factor, welcomed me with a gift-wrapped quid of chewing tobacco. "North of the Albany," he solemnly maintained, "white women chaw." Gertrude, his wife, our hostess and only white woman in the village, assured me that it wasn't necessary.

The evening calm was broken by an impossible clank-clank—the sound of a locomotive bell. No train chugged along. The C.N.R. had donated the bell for the little church steeple. Answering its summons, we gathered for the Christmas service and party. The Indians had come for miles around, bringing the halt and the lame on toboggans. Six squaws whose papooses were to be baptized, punctuated the service with a rhythmic bump-bump-bump as they rocked the cradle boards on the floor. The babies, strapped upright, slept peacefully through the carols and the rather violent, vertical rocking.

Unusual to see in the wilderness was the stained glass window donated by Johnny Yes-No, a prosperous halfbreed free trader. Designed in far-off Toronto, the window had been flown in merely as a jigsaw of coloured glass pieces. I think that it is the only thing about which Neville Clarke brags: "I'm probably the one man in Canada who has put together and leaded a stained glass window in two hours flat," he chuckles. "Perhaps I should have been a glazier!" From other Northerners you'll hear the many stories of the minister's varied secular talents. To date he has delivered safely 47 babies, both white and Indian. He has been promoter, architect and carpenter for

eleven churches and three schools in the untracked Ontario bush. In his "spare time" he works on his pet project of forest farming, a combined settlement and conservation measure for the pulpwood operators.

The next day we jumped north to the Attawapiskat —an Ojibway name meaning "Rough Going." The rugged land smoothed out northward into the Hudson Bay Flats. The constant quiltlike pattern of bush, lake, muskeg, repeated itself, but no longer were the granite bluffs hunched like shoulders. Sometimes we swung low to look at the humps of beaver houses and muskrat lodges on the unnamed lakes. Once we saw the strange stamped-out maze of a moose yard. Then on a stretching finger of a hand-shaped lake, civilization had exclamation points in two red and white radio transmitter towers. Weather stations must be ubiquitous, and at impressively titled Lansdowne House the meteorologists were quietly doing their job and sending out their reports by radio.

In the summer, Lansdowne House weathermen would not feel so isolated. A bustling village of some three hundred sturgeon-fishing Indians would be camped around them. Always on the frontier there is constant vivid contrast of the most modern with the most primitive. These Indians, who cannot speak English, fish for sturgeon with hand-made nets. Their catch is flown out by modern bush-planes and ends up as New York night-club delicacies. In the winter, the Indians leave to hunt and trap; only the Hudson's Bay Company post and the weather station mark the village.

Here we were anxious for news of the Indian bands to the North. Instead of the twentieth century's relaying of moccasin telegraph by radio telephone and bush-plane, the desired information came in true Stone Age style. It came on moccasins. Two Indians trekked in from the Winisk district by dog-team to trade their furs with the H B C. They were able to tell of the current encampments of the northerly Indians.

The next day we followed the pair's dog-team tracks by air. The straight line of their toboggan etched between the herringbones of their snowshoes guided us as surely as a road map to Webequa village. One hour's flying time equalled three day's dogteam mushing. Canon Clarke blessed Flossie the Fairchild and felt grateful for the donations which have made aerial travel possible for him. In the past when he visited his parishioners by dogteam the Christmas trip alone took weeks instead of six days.

Webequa's complete population was out on the ice to greet us when we taxied down. I evidently bewildered the natives. Not one of the four hundred could speak English. After introductions to the smiling councillors or tribe aldermen, Canon Clarke launched into an Obijway explanation of my status. The first hurdle to overcome was to make clear that I was neither his nor Elmer's new wife. I can imagine the Canon's difficulty in explaining "free lance radio writer." The men acknowledged me with gusts of laughter. It was not as hard on my poise as the two-minute unblinking stares of the squaws to whom white sisters were a rarity.

The village consists of a hillside-full of tiny log cabins separated by wavering pole-picket fences and husky dogs. In our honour the villagers opened up an abandoned half-breed trader's shack, then carted in the solitary famous bed for Canon Clarke and Elmer. A cotlike arrangement was put for me.

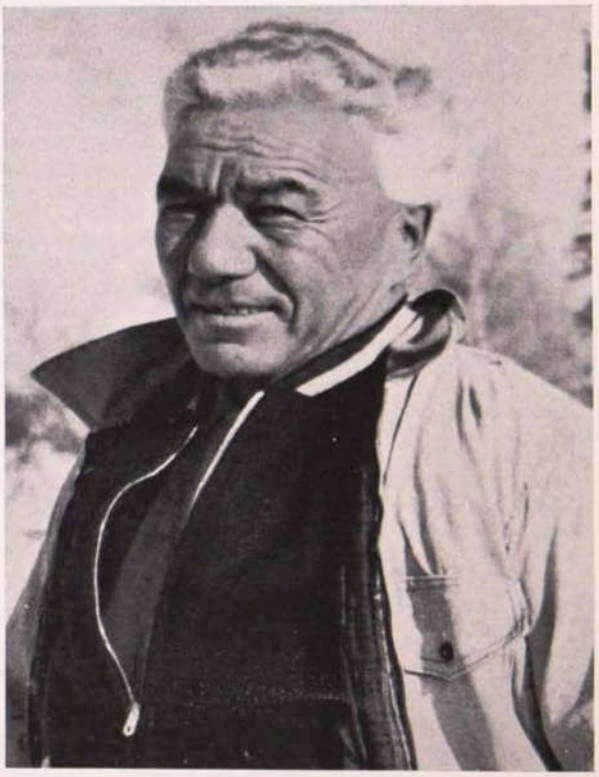
A roaring fire caused the midwinter chill literally to ooze out of the cabin floor and walls. To make their hospitality concrete, the Indians padded in with armsful of wood and pails of lake water from the communal ice hole. Canon Clarke told me to use as much wood and water as possible to show that we appreciated the welcome. The sun shuddered down at 4.30 in the afternoon. In the warmth of the four-day-late Christmas it came as a shock when Elmer read the wing thermometer at 45 degrees below zero. Thereupon we decided to ignore thermometers.

Outside, we distributed the toys, fruit and candy, an operation filled with much giggling and horseplay. Indians at home are not the silent, aloof stoics usually presented to tourists. After a service and many baptisms the villagers visited us in twos and threes, as Canon Clarke held a mixture of court and open house. Some wanted medicine, others domestic advice, while the tribe's headmen discussed the new beaver-trapping regulations, and air-freighting next summer's sturgeon-catch. Quite a few of the villagers brought syllabic-written letters in appropriate airmail envelopes for delivery to other Indian camps en route.

The next morning the alarm clock shook us out of our sleeping bags at six o'clock. The moon was casting barred shadows through the boarded window into the frost-whitened cabin. The men went out to defrost the plane, a two-hour job with the plumber's blowpots. Getting breakfast, I was unnerved by Elmer warming up the engine oil on the blazing stove. By eight o'clock we took off with the full moon over one shoulder and the first hint of dawn over the other.

In this unmapped country Canon Clarke first had flown from Webequa to Summer Beaver with Indian

John Rich of Kaginagami, ex Hudson's Bay tripper, "with a face like a Holbein portrait."



instructions of "go west, two little sleeps and a spring day's walk." He and Elmer had found it. This time we knew the way. The wing thermometer hit 50 below as we landed, and the hoar frost from nearby rapids turned our hair and eyelashes white. Despite the weather the Indian women were dressed as usual in thin bright cotton skirts over layers of flannel petticoats, and under shapeless bundles of sweaters and jackets. Nowhere did I see Ojibway women in the warmer, more sensible ski suits or slacks. Some of them wore hoods of fluffy white winter rabbit, while the children often sported complete suits of these untanned yellow-white hides.

The exquisitely beaded or silk embroidered mitts, jackets and moccasins are reserved for the menfolk. Men definitely rule the home in this territory. None were about Summer Beaver however; the camp larder was dangerously low so the husbands all had gone moose hunting. When we came to take off, Flossie's skis stuck to the ice. No men to help meant that Canon Clarke had to swing from a wing strut until the plane was jolted free, then buffet his way through the blasting slipstream to haul himself aboard the taxiing plane.

We moseyed on over the horizon-less miles. After a call into Penemata it was noon hour when we plummeted down onto Birch Lake, and we wanted lunch. However the head councillor advised Canon Clarke that two of the tribe wanted to be married. They had been waiting for eight months for the minister to drop in from the sky. This request immediately posed a problem. We did not dare stop long or Flossie's engine would freeze up and require hours of defrosting. We also were hungry. The Canon told me to prepare lunch while he married the couple.

The little log church was perhaps twenty-five feet square. Wind blew through the canvas covered "window," snow dropped with unerring aim through the roof and down our necks. Ice formed in patches from the heat of our bodies on the hand-hewn log pews. Canon Clarke slipped into his white surplice and vestments. No matter where a service was held he always robed himself as carefully as for a great cathedral. Elmer sent a little boy to fetch a sharp stick.

Simultaneously, lunch and the wedding started. Canon Clarke stood at the altar, the service flowed on in Ojibway, Matilda and George became one. Elmer and I sat with heads bowed, but Elmer was toasting chunks of hard-frozen bread like marshmallows on a stick against the cherry-red sides of the stove. I had a can of butter clenched between my moccasins trying to chip out the marble-solid spread. Tins of sardines shared space on top of the stove with the Communion wine. We were as reverent as possibly we could be, and at the time it seemed perfectly natural. Necessity is a sure custodian of dogma in the Northland; only later I realized the contrast of this wedding to the satin-pomp of the society reporters.

We got away before Flossie struck against the cold, and winged on another hundred odd miles to the next camp. Ontario always is supposed to be the most prosperous, most civilized of Canada's provinces. It constantly amazed me to find these unmarked, unmapped villages where English is a foreign language, where the homes are one-room cabins, tents, wickis (the simple, sideless, slope-roofed shelters) and even wigwams. Nature's own deep-freeze refrigerator preserved haunches of moose, rabbits and fish in each dwelling's larder cache. The pantry was always elevated on twelve-foot poles to protect it from prowling wildlife and the village dogs. The latter's food was smoked fish, punctured and strung on poles. The village's economy hung from ridgepoles and high branches—otter, mink and fox pelts of every colour.

The last day's flight was unplanned. We were back in mapped country, homeward bound, but we did not know where the Miminiska bands were encamped. One camp was found when we noticed a little lake criss-crossed by many tracks and punctured by water holes. By now Christmas was a week late but the carols and candy were just as welcome. Calendars don't mean much where time is counted by freeze-ups and blizzards.

Although we skimmed low following dogteam tracks for miles, we could not locate the second Miminiska camp and storm-warning sun-dogs persuaded us to turn south.

Our last call at Kaginagami introduced me to the fabulous John Rich, his wife Emma, six children and innumerable grandchildren. He is one of the legendary, vanishing "Hudson's Bay Scotch" or half-breed voyageurs. Silver haired, with a face like a Holbein portrait, his actions are those of a twenty-year old. To-day he lives by trapping, hunting and sturgeon fishing. He explained the skill and patience required to hand-knot thousands of yards of twine into a sturgeon net—a week of continual finger-cricking work; and talked of secret tree-bark recipes for dyeing the nets.

Canon Clarke in turn told me about John, and his work as a "tripper" for the Hudson's Bay Company. A typical summer for Rich had been paddling and portaging 1200 miles by canoe without maps, delivering mail to outposts. The bush plane is cancelling out such characters.

John "hitched" a ride to Nakina for himself, and a ride "to the track" for Emma and his youngest daughter. South bound, we found a lake near the C.N.R. Despite the below-zero temperatures Elmer warned that this lake was mushy. As the plane landed, the snow spluttered greasily. Emma and daughter were bundled out, their showshoes tossed to them, with the plane barely pausing in its taxiing. The women's footprints showed wet in the snow. Freeze-up had come late and been followed by a heavy blizzard before the ice had solidified. It was no place for a heavy airplane to pause. Taking off, Elmer dipped Flossie's wings in farewell to the women who already were plodding the eight miles out to railway civilization.

We too followed the track back to Nakina, racing New Year's Eve. The trip was over "without incident" according to the men. To Elmer it had been routine flying where dogteam tracks, gas caches and a compass are important but a radio and airports superfluous. To Canon Clarke it had been his happy Christmas duty taking faith and cheer to what he calls the "land of the lonely places."

To me it was an adventure turning back the centuries to North America's aboriginal days. The huge Patricia district north of the Albany now has been aerially surveyed by the R.C.A.F. to supply the maps which we lacked in 1947. Perhaps this advance, or a rich uranium strike, or pulpwood or mining, will lead more people to it. When I visited it the lonely places were still in the seventeenth century state of fur trapper and sturgeon fisher, speeded to the pace of rifles and outpost radios—and the Christian festival of Christmas with wings on.

1. Skins are selected from a pile in the Hudson's Bay store at Coppermine in the Western Arctic.

DEERSKIN CLOTHING

Story and Pictures

by J. H. Webster

FEW white people, other than northerners, know that the Eskimos depend on caribou for clothing as well as food. There are several methods employed by the Eskimos in the skinning and handling of caribou skins but the methods described here are those used by the Copper Eskimos. ("Copper" Eskimos, not because their skin is copper coloured, but because when they were first discovered by the white men they were using implements made of native copper.) These people live a nomadic life on the Barrens south and southeast of Coppermine.

Once the caribou has been killed, the hunter removes the white haired skin on the stomach by making four cuts in the form of an oblong. The white haired skin is used for making fancy trim on the caribou skin clothing. After the white "belly" has been removed, the hunter very deftly cuts down the legs to the hoof, around the skin by the hoof, and then quickly removes the entire caribou skin from the carcass. After the skin has been removed, the entrails are cut away and the animal bled.

Most of the skins are dried by placing the hair side next to the ground and then weighing the hide down by placing flat stones on the legs. Sometimes small holes are cut in the edge of the skin and it is pegged down to the ground. In warm weather a skin will dry in about twenty-four hours, but in colder weather it may take several days. After the skin has been dried, the legs are cut off and the skin carefully folded by bringing the two sides to the centre and then folding back the head part a quarter of the way over the hide. The folded skin is now oblong in shape and ready to be stored until required. From twelve to fifteen skins are bundled together inside a large skin which is made into the form of a bag by lacing a cord through several small holes that have been cut in the edge of it.

Great care is exercised by the Eskimo seamstress in selecting suitable skins for different wearing apparel. The lovely brown skins are matched for depth of shade. The thickness of the hair has also to be considered. Thin-haired skins are generally used for inner clothing (with the hair inside), while heavier skins are used for outer clothing (with the hair outside). Two or three skins are required to make a caribou skin *artiggi*, as the inner garment is called, the outer being known as a *koolitak*.

2. The first step in preparing the skin is to take the stiffness out of it by "cracking" it with a blunt instrument called an "ektokkin" made from the shoulder blade of a caribou.

3. The hide is then scraped with a sharp piece of metal called a "hallukin," which removes the "false" skin.

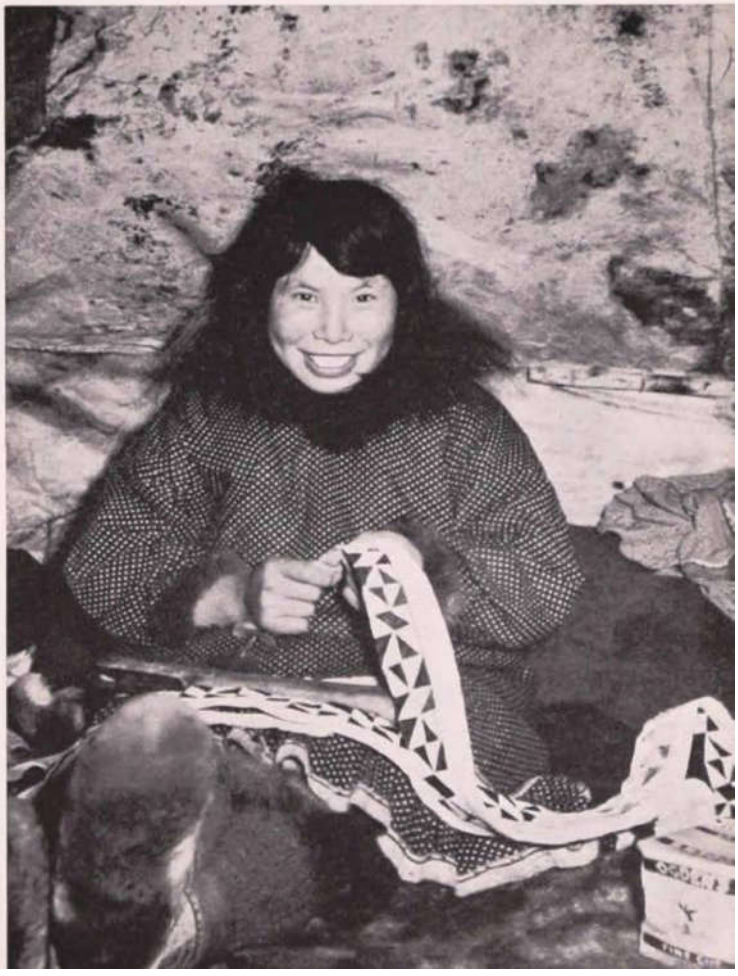
Once the seamstress has selected the necessary skins, she again dries the skin until it cracks when folded between the thumb and finger. Then she removes the stiffness from the skin by "breaking" or scraping it with a blunt edged instrument called an *ektokkin* which has been fashioned from the shoulder blade bone of a caribou. After the skin has been made supple, the hide is ready to be scraped. This is to remove the "false" skin from the hide by scraping with a *hallukin*, a piece of thin metal about two inches wide fastened to a handle made from a piece of bone or caribou antler. The *hallukin* is a sharp edged instrument. The more the skins are scraped the softer they become.

4. The thread for sewing is stripped from sinews obtained from the caribou's back and legs.

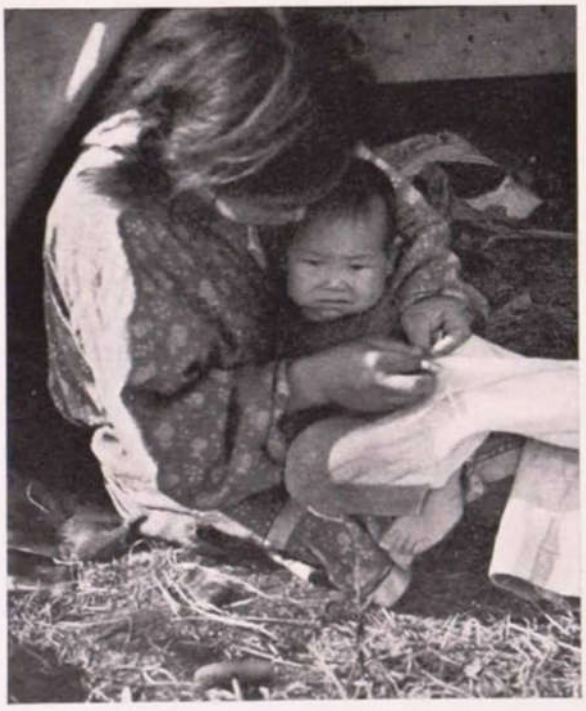
The seamstress cuts the skins to the necessary shape by using a small semi-lunar knife, or *ooloo*. Threads for stitching the skins are obtained from dried tough sinews which have been cut from the back and legs of the caribou and then pulled apart in long strands. All outer garments usually have a liberal amount of fancy trim. Each seamstress has her own particular design and she will spend many hours stitching small pieces of white and brown caribou skin together to make fancy patterns. The *koolitak* (outer coat) always has two white inserts which are fitted at the side of the hood over the ears and then brought down over the breast to represent walrus tusks. This design has been copied from the Western Eskimos and originally was not peculiar to the Copper Eskimos. The hood of the garment is trimmed with a piece of wolverine skin called a *pohitak*. Behind the wolverine skin there is often a large flare of wolf skin to add adornment to the garment. Wolverine skin is used because it fits around the face more comfortably than wolf skin and also prevents the hoar-frost, which accumulates from the wearer's breath, adhering to the face. Wolverine skin is also stitched around the bottom of the sleeves and the bottom edge of the garment.

The leg skins are the most durable skins of the caribou because they have been made tough by the

5. Inside her caribou-skin tent, Bessie Kakagon makes the border for her koolitak from the white belly skin and brown side skin, deftly sewing the pieces together with caribou sinew. The border is always made before the koolitak is begun.



6. Left: A pattern for the new artiggi is obtained by measuring the old one with a piece of string.
Below: The seamstress cuts a skin with an ooloo—the Eskimo woman's semi-lunar knife—to make the back of the artiggi.

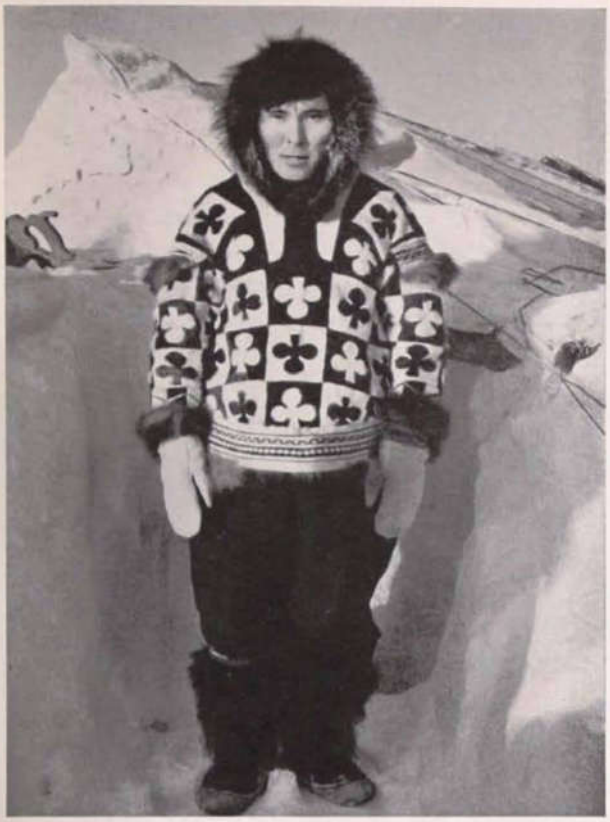


7. Mafa stitches together some pieces of caribou leg skin for a pair of boots. Her year-old baby takes a dim view of it all.

animal's rubbing through the undergrowth. The caribou legs are therefore used for making the tops of boots. Usually eight legs are required to make a pair of knee-high boots. Often the tops of the boots are trimmed with white, and sometimes inserts of white are stitched into the sides. The soles are made from two thicknesses of caribou skin or one thickness of the more durable moosehide which has been imported.

It requires twelve or more caribou skins to make an Eskimo hunter a complete winter outfit of clothing. Besides the *ilupak* and *koolitak*, he will require inner and outer caribou skin pants, two or three pairs of mitts, and two or three pairs of fur socks, as well as two or more pairs of boots.

Travellers, whether they be white or Eskimo, find that inner caribou skin clothing is far more comfortable to wear than imported woollen clothing as, even though it absorbs moisture from perspiration, it will never freeze so long as it is being worn. Woollen underwear and socks will freeze after they have absorbed a certain amount of moisture from perspiration. Caribou skins, therefore, are vital to the lives of the Eskimos, for they are warm, comfortable, durable and withal beautiful to look upon.

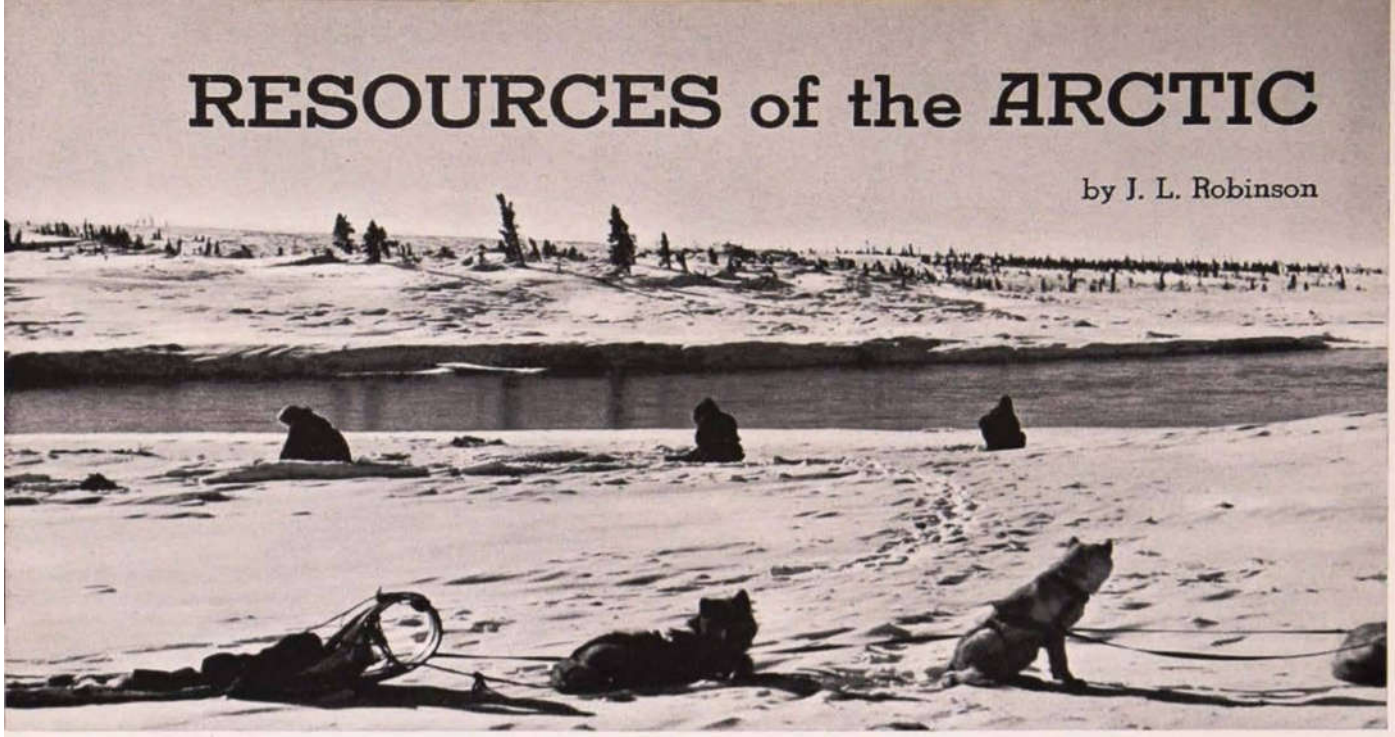


8. Just to show what can (but shouldn't) be done with different coloured skin. Mark Pangun models this nifty number.

9. Bessie Kakagon wears the handsome koolitak she is shown making in pictures 3 and 5, complete with wolf and wolverine trim, and caribou skin pants, boots and gloves.

RESOURCES of the ARCTIC

by J. L. Robinson



Where the Arctic begins. The northern limit of trees, where the "little sticks" peter out into the barren lands. R. Harrington.

THE Northwest Territories occupy a large area on the map of Canada. One third of the Dominion lies north of the 60th parallel of latitude. It has been said frequently that "Canada's frontiers lie northward" or "Canada's future lies in her Northland." But other reports have come out telling of the miles and miles of bleak, barren rock and the heavy, impenetrable polar ice. Readers interested in the Canadian North, and trying to form an intelligent opinion, must wonder. How can an area have "untold resources" and also be an uninhabitable rock desert? How can reports of gardens and farms in cozy valleys fit in with pictures of frozen wastes and ice-capped mountains?

The difficulty lies not in deciding upon the merits of the apparently conflicting reports, but in realizing exactly what part of this vast northern area of Canada is being described. In truth, Canada has at least *two* Northlands. The Subarctic, forested, fertile, resource-potential Mackenzie Valley, of the western part of the Northwest Territories, is an entirely different geographic region from the Arctic tundras and barren rock of the eastern part of the territories. The Mackenzie Valley, and the somewhat similar Yukon Valley to the westward, *do* have resources. As Canada's population spreads northward, and transportation lines feed them, these areas of Northwestern Canada will undoubtedly develop. The Arctic area of the Northwest Territories presents a very different picture.

Unfortunately, there are still many misconceptions of exactly what the Canadian Arctic includes. Many people, including some who should know better, still use the mathematical line of the Arctic Circle as the southern limit of the Arctic region. Since the Arctic is a climatic region, its southern limit is defined as the fifty-degree isotherm for the warmest month. In climate terminology this means that average warm season temperatures never become warm enough to have a "summer" month. This isotherm was not chosen at random, but coincides closely with the northern limit of tree growth. In Canada, it is also a cultural line, separating the Eskimos of the Arctic from the Indians of the woodlands. The Arctic, therefore, is a treeless region of no summers, and the home of the Eskimos.

There is only a narrow strip of Arctic coast in Northwestern Canada. The remainder of this region has warm summers, and is classed as Subarctic. The Arctic broadens to the eastward, however, because of the dominant southeasterly movement of cool air masses and cold ocean currents. The Arctic is cool in "summer" because it either has cold ocean currents offshore or cool air masses overhead. The west coast of Hudson Bay, almost as far south as Churchill, or five hundred miles south of the Arctic Circle, is within the Arctic region. Most of Ungava Peninsula of northwestern Quebec also consists of rocky, treeless barrens. Tree line is seven hundred miles south of the Arctic Circle on the Quebec side of Hudson Bay. The total area of the Canadian Arctic, including northern Quebec, is about one million square miles.

Physical conditions differ a great deal within the large area of the Canadian Arctic. Topographically the region has the highest mountain range in eastern North America, with peaks of over nine thousand feet in eastern Baffin Island and northern Ellesmere Island. It also has extensive monotonous lowlands of the Central Arctic around King William and eastern Victoria Islands. In addition, there are large areas of steep-walled sedimentary plateaus, such as northwestern Baffin Island, Devon Island and western Melville Island, and dissected rocky hill country, such as Boothia Peninsula, Prince Patrick and Ellef Ringnes Islands.

Vegetation is not uniform over the Arctic. It ranges from rolling grassy "prairies" of Banks Island and parts of the western mainland to miles of barren, dis-

integrated rock of northern Keewatin District and southern Baffin Island. Since local site characteristics make great differences in the amount of vegetation cover, the total Arctic tundra vegetation cannot be generalized easily.

Climatically, all the area is continuously cold in winter. Although monthly temperatures remain below zero for five or six months of the year, extreme minimum temperatures have not been as low as those recorded on the mainland of Subarctic Canada. The record low of -63°F. at Cambridge Bay has been passed many times in more southerly parts of Canada. Average summer monthly temperatures never rise above 50 degrees F., but daily temperatures may reach into the 70's in late July and early August, and maxima of 81 and 83 degrees have been recorded. Precipitation is less than ten inches annually in most of the area, about fifty percent of which is rain. However, southeastern Baffin Island has permanent icecaps fed by nearly twenty inches of precipitation.

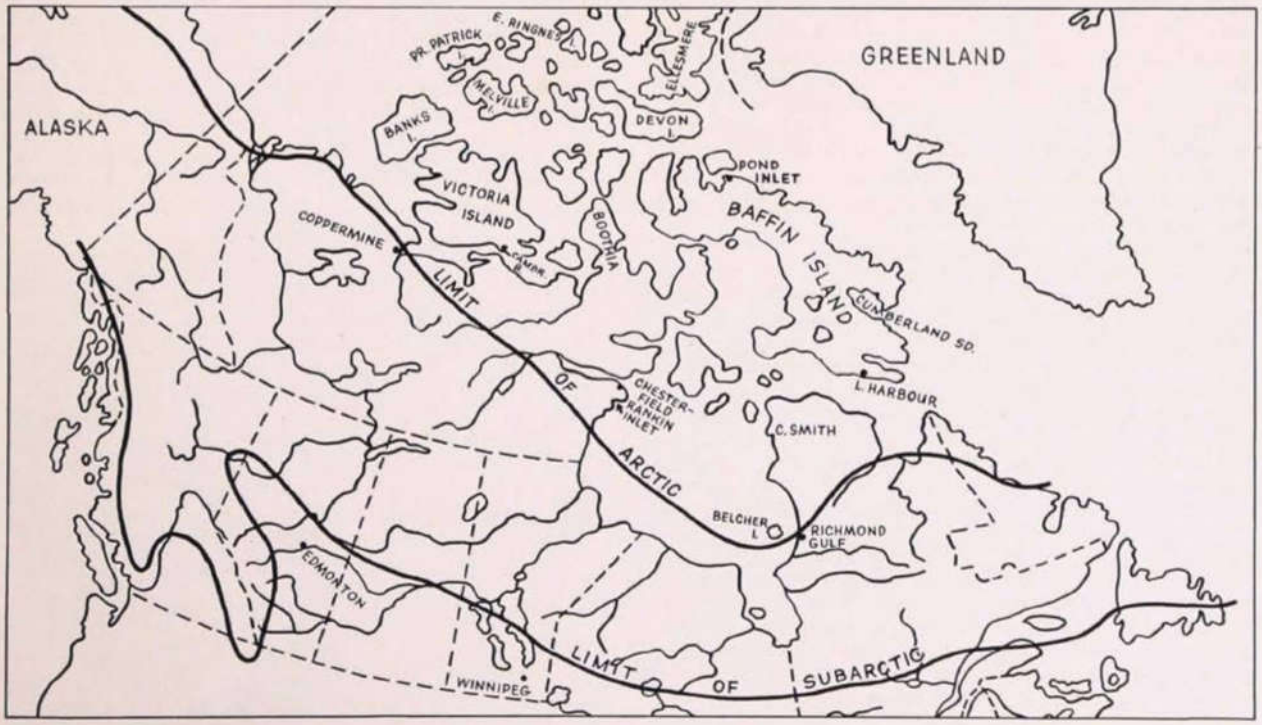
Because of this physical environment, certain resources are not found in the Arctic. Since it is a treeless area, there is no forestry. All lumber must be imported and fuel is supplied by imported coal or fuel oil. The erection of dwellings and the costs of living in the area are therefore high. There is no agriculture practised in the region. Frosts occur in every month, and in addition, soil has been swept away by glacial action in most places, or has not developed sufficiently in the deposition in the valleys. Gardening is carried on as a hobby at several trading-post settlements. A few vegetables, grown under glass and on imported soil, give a welcome treat of green to the summer diet. But the size of the garden is often limited by the number of storm windows from the house.

The only exported resource from the Canadian Arctic is fur. The Arctic, or white, fox is one of the few fur bearers living north of the tree line. Since the first fur trading post was established in the Eastern Arctic forty years ago, an increasing number of Eskimos have been taught to trap this valuable animal. They turn in the pelts to the trading posts of the historic Hudson's Bay Company, scattered every hundred to two hundred miles along the coasts of the Arctic mainland and southern Arctic Islands. Unfortunately, the white fox has a four-year cycle of abundance. In peak years as many as three or four thousand pelts may be traded at a single post, but in years of scarcity perhaps only a few hundred may be trapped. This natural cycle has brought a factor of instability into the Eskimo's economy. At one time the Eskimo obtained most of his food and clothing from the fauna of the sea and land, but now most of them depend, in varying degrees, upon trade goods obtained from the store in return for fox pelts.

As more and more Eskimos become trappers, the annual fox catch is increasing. About thirty thousand to forty thousand white fox pelts are brought out by the trading companies in good years. Even the poor years of the fox cycle now have larger total catches than the peak years of two decades ago. This increase is due chiefly to the greater mobility and application of the Eskimos rather than to any greater number of foxes. The records indicate that the peak years of the fox cycle vary regionally. This regional variation is fortunate in the Arctic economy for it means that the poor years of the fox catch are not experienced throughout the Northland at the same time.

Mineral resources form one of the economic potentialities of the Arctic. Part of the area is underlain by Precambrian rocks of the Canadian Shield. These ancient rocks have often yielded great wealth where explored in more southerly parts of Canada, but very little is yet known about their structure or composi-

The southern limit of the Arctic—the 50° isotherm for the warmest month—coincides closely with the tree line.



Peaks of over 9000 feet occur in the Eastern Arctic. Those on Bylot Island, seen here from Pond Inlet, rise to 5000 feet. J.W.A.

tion in the Arctic. In many places prospecting is easy, since tree-cover is lacking, and bare, scoured rock is exposed to the surface. Much preliminary prospecting is, in fact, done from aerial photographs. There are other areas, however, covered with a deep layer of glacial till which prohibits bedrock exploration.

Copper has been known near the mouth of Coppermine River since the earliest days when Samuel Hearne explored the northern Canadian mainland in 1770-72. Native copper was used by the Eskimos for tools, and the source area was sometimes raided by Indians. Inaccessibility, through costs of transportation, limited its use to the native economy only. The copper deposits have been investigated several times by reputable mining companies in the past twenty years, and found to be of uneconomic grade.

The sedimentary rocks of the Western Arctic may contain petroleum. Petroleum has been discovered nearby at Norman Wells in the Mackenzie Valley, along the Arctic coast at Point Barrow, Alaska, and across the Arctic Ocean on the Soviet shores. Bituminous seepages have been reported by explorers on Melville Island of the northwestern Arctic Islands. Structural domes* have been noted on several of the far northern islands in recent aerial photographs of this little known area. Since virtually nothing is known about the structure of the rocks, and even data regarding age are scanty, petroleum must remain as a nebulous potentiality until more information is collected.

Coal is the only mineral now being mined in the Canadian Arctic. The occurrence of low-grade lignite coal has been noted in several places in the northern group of Arctic Islands, and frequently burned as fuel by explorers. The only active mining, however, is carried on at Pond Inlet, northern Baffin Island, where about fifty tons is mined annually for the police, mission and trading post buildings located there. The coal has a high heat quality but crumbles easily. The government is now investigating the possibilities of briquetting it for shipment to other northern posts. In a treeless area of long, cold winters with high transportation costs, the value of a workable coal seam is apparent.

Other mineral occurrences have raised hopes that the Arctic may have underground wealth to compensate for its barren surface. A high-grade nickel deposit was discovered in 1929 at Rankin Inlet, on the west coast of Hudson Bay, but later drilling proved the deposit to be too shallow to withstand the cost of mining. Garnet was mined by the Hudson's Bay Company at Lake Harbour, on southern Baffin Island, for a few years after World War I. Several loads of graphite were taken out of Cumberland Sound, on eastern Baffin Island. A copper-nickel ore at Cape Smith, east coast of Hudson Bay, proved too finely disseminated for development. Farther south along

The skins of foxes, sole exported resource of the Arctic, account for much of the white settlement there. J. Cormack

*Upfolded rocks which sometimes trap petroleum.

Government officials take samples of coal mined at Pond Inlet. Right, J. G. Wright; centre, Alex Stevenson. N.F.B.

this coast, lead, which was mined near Richmond Gulf by the Hudson's Bay Company two centuries ago, is being investigated again. The iron reserve on the Belcher Islands, although high in silica content, is held by a Toronto mining company for further development.

None of the occurrences has proved valuable. The problem now facing the geologists and mining men is to determine whether this means that all occurrences will prove small, or alternatively that the Arctic *is* mineralized, and bigger finds await more thorough prospecting. Up to the present, more favourable areas farther south, closer to markets and with more reliable transportation, have occupied the attention of the geological staffs.

Biotic resources have only local importance. There is a wild life population both on the land and in the sea that supplies adequate food and clothing to the natives. Large herds of caribou summer on the Arctic tundra of the mainland, and are killed for food and clothing by the inland and some coastal Eskimos. In some areas caribou have become scarce, either through overhunting with rifles or owing to shifts in migration routes. Surplus hides are moved from one area to another within the Arctic but very few leave the region.

Hair seals are found throughout the Arctic waters, and are the staff of life for most of the Eskimo population, who are coastal dwellers. Arctic char are netted at the mouths of known fishing streams as they ascend in the fall, but are only sufficient for local food and dog feed. Having learned a lesson from the depleted resources of Labrador and declining catches off Greenland, Canada does not permit commercial sealing or fishing in her Arctic. Since the health and welfare of the native population depend greatly on their natural food supply, wildlife management is important for these scanty resources. White men are not allowed to hunt or trap in the Arctic Islands or on the mainland between Coppermine River and Chesterfield Inlet.

The resources of the Canadian Arctic are therefore few. Forestry and agriculture are lacking. Mining is possible, but of unknown quality. Wildlife resources are about in balance with the native population. The white fox, which the Eskimo describes as a useless animal, is the only exported resource, and is the reason for much of the white settlement in the Arctic.

In this area of one million square miles, there are about eight thousand Eskimos and two hundred whites. The population is indeed sparse. The largest white settlement, at Chesterfield, has only about twenty-five persons, and they are chiefly concerned with work at the Roman Catholic Mission or hospital. The largest Eskimo camps seldom have over fifty people at one time, and the average density for the settled parts of the Arctic is one Eskimo per one hundred and fifteen square miles. The strategic location of the Arctic, in terms of air traffic and weather forecasting, is important. The recently established outposts on the far northern islands, usually serviced by air transport, are designed for that purpose. However, the known natural resources which are the basis of notable population growth are lacking. It is doubtful if this large area will play an important part in the total Canadian economy for many years to come.

All lumber for Arctic buildings must be imported from the south. Here a load comes ashore under difficulties at Arctic Bay. J.W.A.

Paul Kane's painting of the Assiniboine camp described here, with Rocky Mountain House in the distance. Kane was there in 1848. Royal Ontario Museum.

ROCKY MOUNTAIN HOUSE

by Freeda Fleming

This historic fort, which knew so many famous explorers and fur traders, was established 150 years ago.

ON the great plains of Western Canada that crowd the rolling foothills of the Rockies, the spirits of all those bold explorers and traders, led by David Thompson, must surely salute the hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the building of Rocky Mountain House. Historical records of this post are scarce, and over them has been woven a veil of legend and fancy and fiction. But through it all we can determine some facts—chiefly from Hudson's Bay records, the journals of David Thompson and McDonald of Garth, and the diary of Father Lacombe.

Established by either Duncan McGillivray of the North West Company or his chief Angus Shaw, in 1799, Rocky Mountain House was for over seventy years the most westerly and southerly fort in the Blackfoot country. Anthony Henday of the Hudson's Bay Company had been in that area in 1754-5, but he had built no post there. However, while the Nor'-westers' post was building, James Bird of the H B C was erecting Acton House nearby, and the two rival forts continued to vie with each other for eight years.

Both of them were situated on the left bank of the North Saskatchewan River not far from its junction with the Clearwater, with the Rocky Mountains as a backdrop. David Thompson reports that a year after they were established, Duncan McGillivray (William's younger brother) arrived at Rocky Mountain House "to prepare to cross the Mountains." The North West Company was about to take the bold step of establishing forts on the far side of the Rockies, and McGillivray had with him the only copy in Canada of Capt. Vancouver's *Voyage of Discovery*, so that he could learn what was to be expected on the Pacific coast where he hoped his Company would soon begin trading. While there, he made pertinent extracts from the book, which Thompson copied for his own use. The following summer, 1801, McGillivray made two preliminary expeditions from Rocky Mountain House into the mountains to seek out passes that could be travelled by canoe or pack horse.

By 1802 the post had justified its existence sufficiently for the North West Company to order its expansion and the provision of extensive fortifications. This was carried out by John McDonald of Garth, who had succeeded McGillivray in charge of the district. Five years later McDonald supervised at the fort the preparations for David Thompson's famous journey, which resulted in his discovery and exploration of the upper Columbia River. About the same time Acton House was abandoned, and the Nor' westers remained unchallenged in that locality until the H B post was re-established in 1819.

Two years after that, when the two companies amalgamated, Acton House was again abandoned in favour of the larger and more strongly fortified Rocky Mountain House. But from 1828, the former N.W.

post was kept open only during the winter for the Piegan trade—dried and pounded meat, dressed leather, wolf skins, etc. Thus it continued, with brief intervals of vacancy, until the increasing hostility of the Indians forced Joseph Brazeau to withdraw all his men and temporarily abandon it in 1861.

This danger from the warlike tribesmen of the Blackfoot confederacy seems to have been nothing out of the ordinary. Chief Factor John Rowand, for instance, writing from Edmonton House in January 1842, refers to "C. T. Harriott at Rocky Mountain House who is tormented almost out of his life since the beginning of October by numerous bands of brutes of Slave [the Cree term for the Blackfeet] Indians who promised to make plenty of robes and kill wolves this winter." And he adds that he wishes his colleagues in the east could "learn what it is to deal with Indians, not with pitiful Muskagoes or even Crees for it is a pleasure or even childs play to settle with them."

Paul Kane, the painter, visited the fort in April 1848, and devotes five pages of his book to a description of his stay there. He has also left us an oil painting of an Assiniboine camp with the fort in the distance. "This fort," he writes, "is beautifully situated on the banks of the Saskatchewan, in a small prairie, backed by the Rocky Mountains in the distance. In the vicinity was a camp of Assiniboine lodges, formed entirely of pine branches. . . . It is built like most of the other forts, of wood, but with more than ordinary regard to strength, which is thought necessary on account of the vicious disposition of the Blackfoot tribe, who are, without exception, the most warlike on the northern continent. I may state that beds of coal are seen protruding here along the banks of the river, similar to that of Edmonton." (Coal is still taken from those beds, and the surveyors of the rich Brazeau coal fields sixty miles to the west followed the old trails that led directly to them.)

"We found a man at the establishment," Kane continues, "called Jemmy Jock, a Cree half-breed who had temporary charge of it. . . . I learned much from him relative to the customs of the Blackfoot tribe, of which, owing to his long residence among them, thirty or forty years, he possessed a greater knowledge probably than any other man with the same education.

"Shortly after my arrival a report was brought in that the Blackfoot Indians had killed a party of Crees, and that amongst the slain was a pipe-stem carrier, whom they had skinned and stuffed with grass; the figure was then placed in a trail which the Crees were accustomed to pass in their hunting excursions. The Assiniboines, who reside in the vicinity of this fort, I found the most kind and honourable of any tribe that I met with."

There is a story, not substantiated by any Hudson's Bay record, that a young Piegan, who had been nursed through a terrible measles epidemic two years before by the post officials, came to them in gratitude and warned them the post was to be attacked. Since the force of men at hand was too small adequately to defend the place against a large hostile band of Indians, and since food supplies were very low and no more coming in due to the roving bands of warring tribes cutting them off from the friendlier Indians, it was decided to abandon the fort and retire to Edmonton. This was accomplished under cover of darkness, without any loss of life. The Blackfeet, angered to find their victims escaped, burned the fort with all its buildings to the ground. Whether or not this is strictly true is a matter for conjecture. Records do show that in 1861 the post was abandoned, owing to fears of starvation and the threatening attitude of the Blackfeet, and later mention is made of it having been destroyed, but no details are given.

One of the most readable accounts of Rocky Mountain House is found in W. J. Moberly's reminiscences, published first in the *Beaver* for October 1921 to October 1922, and later in book form, edited by W. B. Cameron, under the title *When Fur Was King*. Moberly arrived at the fort in October 1854, and thus describes it:

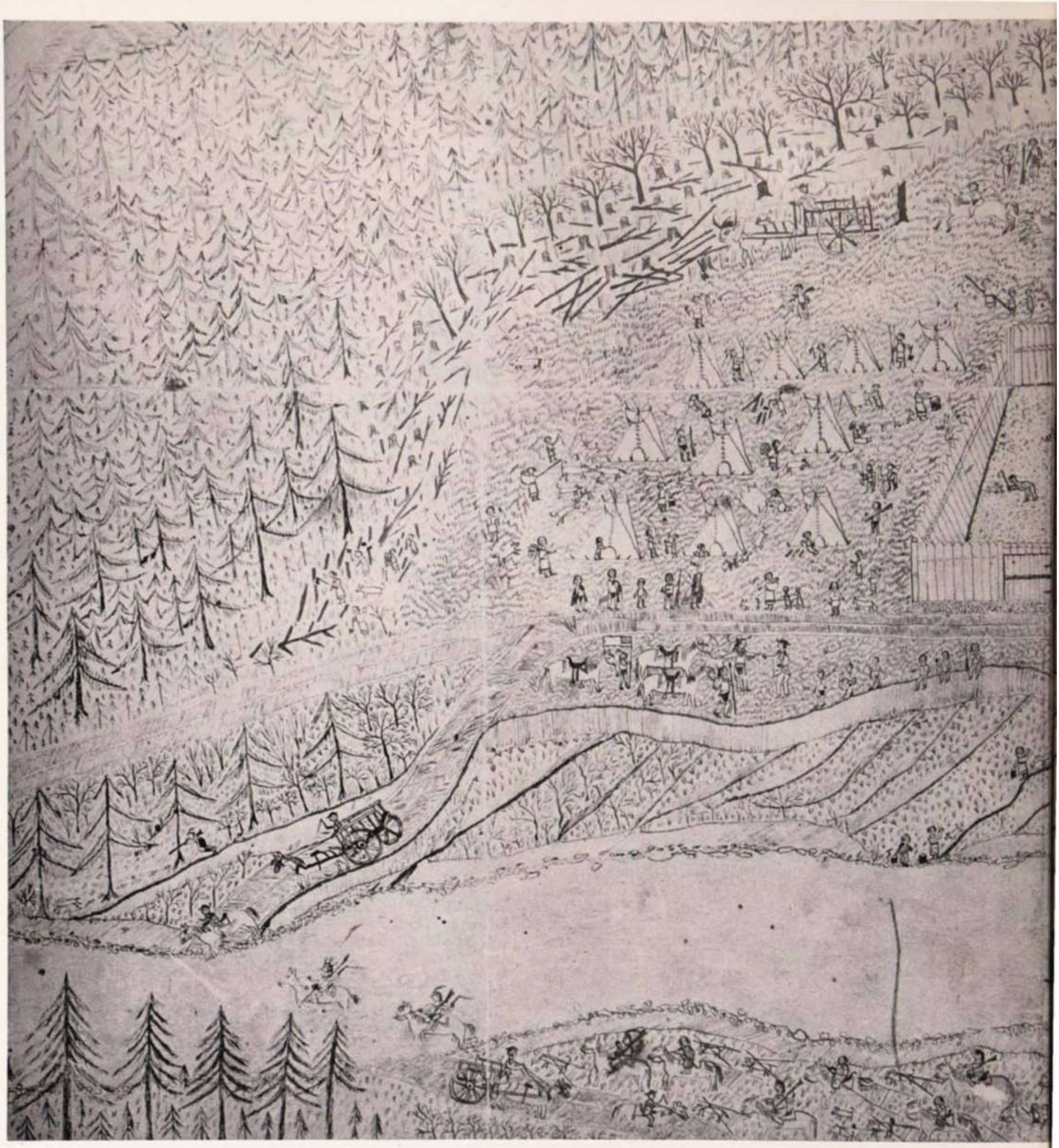
"The post was surrounded by the usual twenty-eight-foot pickets with a block bastion at each corner and a gallery running all round inside about four and a half feet from the top, each bastion containing a supply of flintlocks and ammunition. Within was a square formed by the officers' houses, men's houses, storehouses and the general trading shops, a square between this and the pickets for boat building, with forges and carpenter shops, another square for horses and a fourth for general purposes. There were two gates, the main gate on the north side, and a smaller one on the south side leading through a narrow passage into a long hall the height of the stockade."

Since the fort was not used in the summer months, much time was needed each autumn to make the quarters for the men livable before winter set in. Sir James Hector, in his report of 1858, stated that "it is in a very ruinous condition, owing to its being abandoned every summer, when it is generally adopted as a residence by several families of Indians, who prove anything but improving tenants." Palliser, Hector's companion, visited the post in the winter and spring of 1859, and was much taken with the officer in charge, J. E. Brazeau.

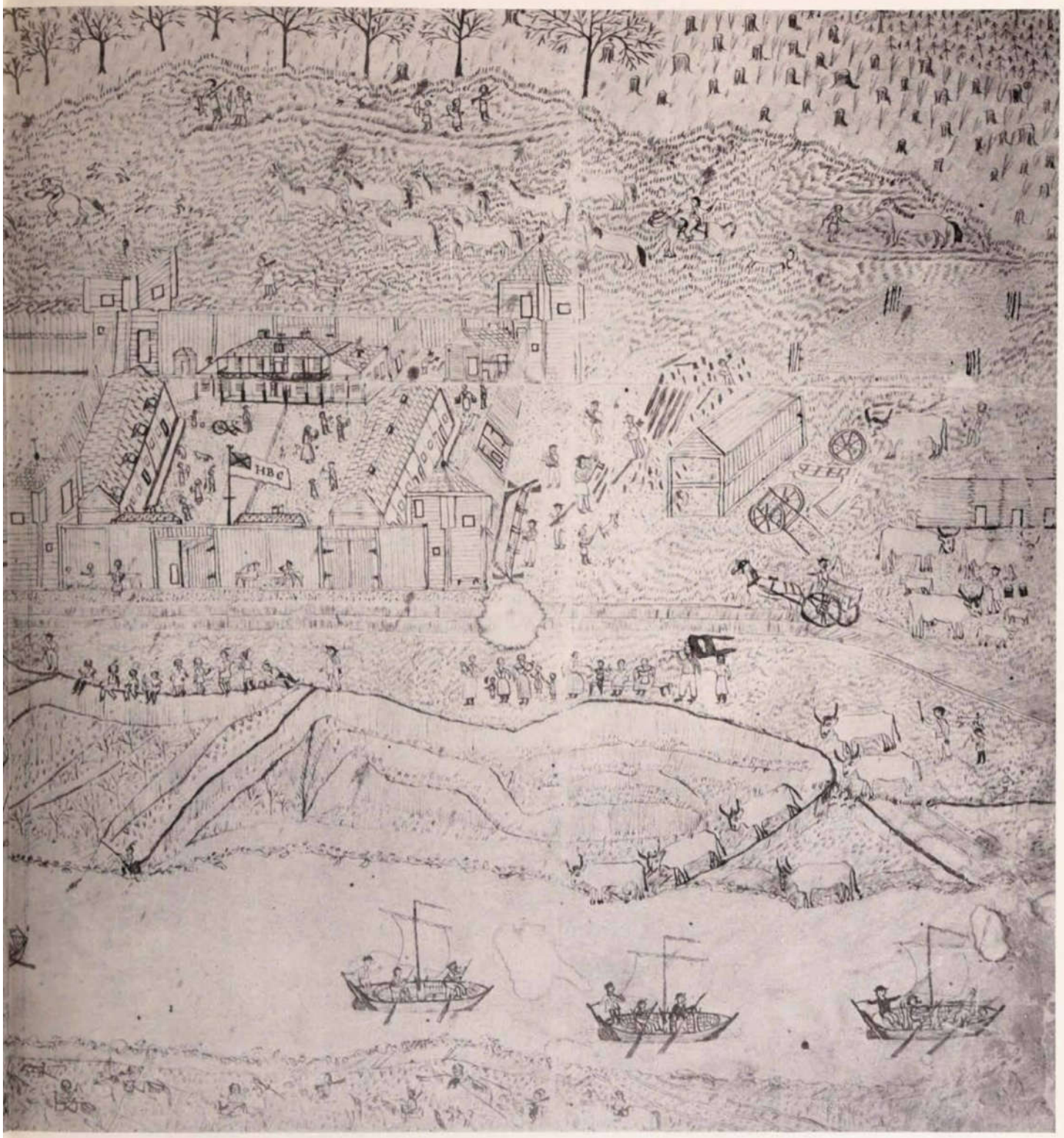
"Mr. Brazeau," he says, "had been for many years in the American Indian fur trade; was a wonderful linguist, and spoke Stoney, Sioux, Salteau, Cree, Blackfoot, and Crow—six languages, five of which are totally distinct from one another. Being of an old Spanish family, and educated in the United States, he also spoke English, French, and Spanish fluently. He carried on a very brisk trade with the Blackfeet, but seemed to be most wretchedly supplied with goods for the trade, and latterly had to send away bands of Blackfeet, eighty and one hundred strong, well laden with buffalo robes, bear skins, wolf skins, and other less valuable furs." Palliser adds: "Rocky Mountain House is a small post, in a very shaky condition, nevertheless the business of the Company is briskly conducted, and work seems much more the order of the day than at Edmonton, where the half breeds in the service of the Company appear very idle, lazy, and impudent."

Mountain House, as it was often called, was also a boat-building post, and Palliser reported that "13 fine Mackmow [Mackinaw, i.e. York] boats were turned out before the 1st of May, about 35 feet long, and capable of carrying 75 pieces of 90 lb. each."

After Brazeau abandoned the post in 1861, it lay deserted for three years until re-established by Chief Trader (later Senator) Richard Hardisty. At that time a new fort was started about fifty chains downstream from the old one, and about one and a quarter miles above the mouth of the Clearwater. The Dominion government surveyor, W. S. Gore, surveyed



This primitive drawing of Rocky Mountain House was done by "J.L." in 1873, and shows in great detail many of the activities of a western fur trade post in that era. In the foreground a band of Blackfeet is arriving with their horse- and dog-travois, and starting to cross the ford where traders and Red River carts are coming to meet them. Across the North Saskatchewan to the left of the fort the post manager is welcoming the chief and sub-chiefs, one of whom carries a flag. Another band of ten lodges is already encamped to the left of the palisade surrounding the garden, and the women are seen at their chores—chopping wood, minding children, pegging out hides and stopping a dog fight. Against the right



hand wall of the fort a York boat is being built or repaired, and in the river a brigade of boats is setting off downstream, presumably to Edmonton. Above them, the cattle are being driven down to drink in the river. The two-storey building in the fort is the one to which the present stone chimneys belonged. They are pictured on the next page.

The original of this drawing was given to Sir Sandford Fleming, the C.P.R. survey engineer, in 1874, and eventually found its way to a library in Pittsburgh. This reproduction was made through the kindness of Donald Leslie, St. John, N.B., from a photostat in his possession. The top of the original not shown here, depicts the Rockies in the distance.

the Company holdings there in 1873, and mentioned in his report that "the fort is new and substantially built but there is very little trading done there now, the Blackfeet finding a market nearer their hunting grounds." Two years later, in fact, Rocky Mountain House was closed, and never reopened.

Much credit for the success of the trading post at this far western point in the midst of warring tribes is due to the sagacity and wisdom of the factors in charge of the Company's business. Every effort was made to keep the neighbouring Indian bands friendly to the white men, to trade fairly with them, to encourage trade, and to promote friendlier relations among the Indians themselves. Here were brought packs of rich furs, buffalo robes and tongues, pemmican for summer food stores, cakes and bladders of grease, dressed hides and fresh meat, all of which were traded by the Indians for blankets, tobacco, vermilion, knives, axes, needles, beads, flour, guns and ammunition.

Father Lacombe, Jesuit missionary for so many years in what was later to become Alberta, did much to allay the hostility of the Indians and win their confidence and friendship for the white men. Early in 1865 word was brought to him that the Indians around Rocky Mountain House were down with an epidemic of typhoid. He hurried to them and for many weeks nursed them and cared for them until the last traces of the disease were gone. Later that year he returned to the Mountain House to spend Christmas with his good friend, Richard Hardisty. In 1870 he again spent the winter at Rocky collecting and revising his notes on his Cree language dictionary and grammar.

The area around the Rocky Mountain House was a rich buffalo hunting ground. Different methods of hunting these animals were used by the Indians and the white hunters. The high cliffs along the south and east side of the Saskatchewan and Clearwater Rivers provided the setting for scenes of grisly slaughter, as whole herds of buffalo were stampeded over the high banks to be shattered on the rocks below. The success of these drives may be imagined when it is noted that one shipment went out of there consisting of seven wagon loads of tongues alone.

In 1931 the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada unveiled a cairn at the site of the old Rocky Mountain House fort. On the cairn is a bronze plaque setting forth in imperishable letters the record of the early post and its brave men. Nearby stand the remains of the eighty-five-year-old chimneys, restored to a partial measure of their original height, and reinforced against the weather and predatory hands by concrete. A fitting memorial to the memory of David Thompson stands in the naming of the recently constructed steel bridge spanning the Saskatchewan River at the town of Rocky Mountain House and the highway leading into the mountains eighty miles to the westward, the David Thompson Bridge and the David Thompson Highway. The highway, when completed, will leave the Calgary-Edmonton highway at Crossroads and travel west until it passes through Sylvan Lake, Rocky Mountain House, and Nordegg. From Nordegg it will go through the first range of mountains at Windy Point and on across the Kootenay Plains, then through the Howse Pass to join the Banff-Jasper highway near the Columbia Icefields. This route is almost identical with that followed by David Thompson in following the Saskatchewan to its source and then on to the headwaters of the Columbia. No more fitting tribute could be paid to his adventurous spirit.

All that remains of Rocky Mountain House—the chimneys of the main building in the 1864 fort.

BOOK REVIEWS

NORTH TO THE UNKNOWN; the Achievements and Adventures of David Thompson. By Hubert Evans. McClelland & Stewart, Toronto, 1949.

BLANKETS AND BEADS; A History of the Saskatchewan River. By J. G. MacGregor. Institute of Applied Art, Edmonton, 1949.

FEW of the Champlain Society's volumes have had a warmer welcome than J. B. Tyrrell's edition of David Thompson's *Narrative*. This live and vivid story provides an obvious opportunity for a competent and enterprising author of books for boys to write, on the one hand, a light, readable and accurate biography, or, on the other, a confessed work of fiction, borrowing local colour but inventing characters. Instead of either we get *North to the Unknown*—and how is the reviewer to describe it? By its subtitle it purports to give the true story of David Thompson; the air of truth is maintained by frequent quotation from Thompson himself and the appearance throughout the book of genuine historical characters. But after appropriating all these trappings of authenticity, Mr. Evans proceeds to use his imagination in such a manner that his book can only be called fiction masquerading under false pretenses.

Thus, for example, we are told "Many whites go over to the North Westers." Who, the reviewer asked himself as he read, were these "many" glamorous turncoats? Page 148 provides the answer—"the two Mackenzies (i.e. Alexander and Roderick), Simon Fraser and the rest." How these old Nor'Westers must turn in their graves at being called renegade "Potties"! And the whole book is littered with ridiculous blunders of this kind.

Mr. Evans has not bothered to acquire any real grasp of the period of which he writes or knowledge of its local colour. That surely is one of the first tasks of the historical novelist. But even supposing an author fails there, his book may still have merit if it is a well constructed story. To be well constructed however, a story must be consistent with itself, and *North to the Unknown* is too often conspicuously inconsistent with itself. To give one example: Thompson is described, correctly, as "apprenticed for seven years" to the H B C in 1784; but not till 1797 does Mr. Evans release him from that apprenticeship.

The handling of the H B C may mildly amuse *Beaver* readers. J. B. Tyrrell, from whose work this book is parasitized, long since showed how readily all the discoveries of H B C explorers were made public by the Company; but Mr. Evans elects to revive the old chestnut that the Company was opposed to mapping for the reason that it would open their "private domain" to the "riff raff of all Europe"—as if this "private domain" was not already wide open to the "riff raff" of Montreal, who, in spite of Mr. Evans' frequent reference to "private traders," were amply successful in keeping out all riff raff but themselves. As sloppy or unscrupulous a piece of quotation as we remember seeing occurs on pp.75-6, where Mr. Evans first quotes Thompson's views on the Hudson's Bay Company's treating of the Indians to liquor at York, quite legitimately and nearly correctly; but then immediately afterwards he quotes Thompson's critical remarks about the use of alcohol by the *Nor'-Westers* as a trade article—and this is done without a hint of a change of subject. Thus does Mr. Evans ascribe the sins of the Nor'Westers to the H B C.

Individual H B C men are sharply divided into sheep and goats. The grossest parody of all is of the luckless Humphrey Marten of York. Mr. Evans' "Factor Marten" seems modelled on Mr. Chas. Laughton as Captain Bligh, a roaring bully whose chief amusement appears to be knocking men down. The real Marten was unpopular enough, but he was also a chronic invalid and he was well past fifty. Hardly qualified to go about knocking men down! But then in novels and movies men always topple over so much more easily than in real life.

It won't do to say "Ah, but this book is only a story for kids." The Canadian schoolboys we have known were well able to appreciate, and therefore deserved, much better things than this. *North to the Unknown* is a bad book that is likely to have two bad consequences. First, it may persuade writers and publishers that David Thompson is an exhausted subject. He is not. There remains ample room for a good boys' book on him. Secondly, Mr. Evans will bewilder a lot of kids. What they read at home on Sunday afternoon is going to be contradicted on Monday morning by any competent Canadian school teacher. In the resulting confusion they are liable to decide with Mr. Ford that history is bunk, and that decision will effectually cut them off from the pleasure of history as a hobby.

If an illustration of the worthwhileness of history as a layman's hobby were needed it would be hard to find a better one than *Blankets and Beads*. Its author is an engineer who just missed being born in the Saskatchewan valley but made good the omission by emigrating thither from Scotland at the age of twelve months. He loves the land in which he grew up and his book is the result of his affection for the river that, successively navigated by canoe, York boat and steamer, remained the great highway of the West till the railways came and steam ashore cut out steam afloat. His scope embraces all who travelled on his river's waters or settled on its shores. He has learnt the pleasure of discovering the truth for its own sake. He knows the fur traders of the river from their own journals, he knows the missionaries and Indians too; he writes of rebels with sympathetic understanding and with humorous realism of homesteaders. We are not going to describe his book, for we feel most readers of the *Beaver* will want to buy it, and hence would thank us little for skimming the cream off it here. It is a very cheaply produced volume, but we buy books today for their contents, not their appearance. Its illustrations are well chosen. Quite apart from its general interest, professional and local historians alike may value it for the author's careful catalogue of the location, dates of occupation and ownership of all trading posts upon his river.—*R. Glover.*

THE HONOURABLE COMPANY: A History of the Hudson's Bay Company: by Douglas MacKay, revised to 1949 by Alice MacKay. McClelland & Stewart, Toronto, 1949. 397 pages.

ALL readers of the *Beaver* and of Canadian history, especially that of the Canadian North and West, will welcome this timely and valuable second edition of *The Honourable Company*. Douglas MacKay's vivid and authentic history of the great company has been competently and sympathetically revised on eighty pages or more by Alice MacKay in the light of research and sources published since the first edition of 1936. The colour and warmth, the candour and sure historical sense, which made the first edition a delight to layman and historian, have been preserved; but the new edition supersedes the old in several important respects.

In Chapter I, for example, while one wonders on rereading at the sureness with which Douglas MacKay told the involved story of Radisson and Groseilliers, it was apparent that Grace Lee Nute's *Caesars of the Wilderness*, published in 1943, had become the definitive history of the two men who were the forerunners of the Company. Chapter I is now fully revised in the light of Dr. Nute's exhaustive researches.

More sweeping are the changes made in the account of the union of the North West with the Hudson's Bay Company. The publication of the Hudson's Bay Company Record Series since 1938, especially of *McLoughlin's Fort Vancouver Letters, 1825-38*, with a brilliant introduction by W. Kaye Lamb, made the revision necessary and possible.

In less important revisions the gain has been in clarity and incisiveness. The author had dealt frankly, if somewhat jocularly, with George Simpson's marital infidelities; the editor, with feminine realism, names and numbers Simpson's by-blows, and makes the point, necessary to an understanding of the social life of fur trade days, that irregular unions were inevitable, and that what mattered was how the consequences were faced. In this Simpson set a high standard, and insisted on Company men doing the same.

The illustrations have been reduced in number, but improved in choice and quality. The excellent sketch maps of R. H. H. Macaulay, a model of their kind, and an example of how maps may be used to illustrate a narrative, have been retained entire.

Where so much is excellent, flaws, of course, stand out. On page 32, for example, it is surely an error of judgment and a fault of style to write of Radisson and Groseilliers that they "showed up the overland trail from the St. Lawrence to Hudson Bay?" What they did was to reveal that Hudson Bay afforded a superior approach to the northern fur forest. On page 36 an error of the first edition is repeated, that the trading cargo of the *Nonsuch* was worth £650, and her cargo of furs £19,000.* To say that the loss of Fort Prince of Wales in 1792 has never been satisfactorily explained (p. 103) is to ignore A. S. Morton's remarks in his *History of the Canadian West to 1870-1* (p. 227) and R. Glover's article in the *Beaver*, March 1947. On the map on p. 106 the misspelling of Methye (Mathye) Portage is retained. On p. 130 the assertion of the first edition that Selkirk bought control of the Company is contradicted by the revision on p. 134, which correctly refers to his holdings in 1811 as being "far from control." The point which is always missed here, and it is not clear even in Morton, though it is in the *Papers Relating to the Disturbances at Red River* (London, 1819), p. 41, is that in 1811 Selkirk and his associates owned enough of the *voting*, as distinguished from the non-voting, stock to form the nucleus of a majority. On page 149 both editions use a construction which implies that the affair at Seven Oaks occurred in 1817 instead of 1816. It is also a mistake, in this reviewer's opinion, not to have added some works published since 1936 to the selective bibliography, as it is to have left some of those originally included.

The editor is to be congratulated on the way in which the last chapter, which brings the story up to date, has been revised and extended. No task is more difficult than to bring an historical narrative "up to date." Here it has been carried out admirably, and the story of the transformation of the government and methods of the fur trade empire of 1870 into those of a modern business corporation have been presented in broad outline. The history of the Company since 1870 constitutes a singularly interesting section of business history, and it is much to the credit of the MacKays that their book makes the fact so evident.—*W. L. Morton.*

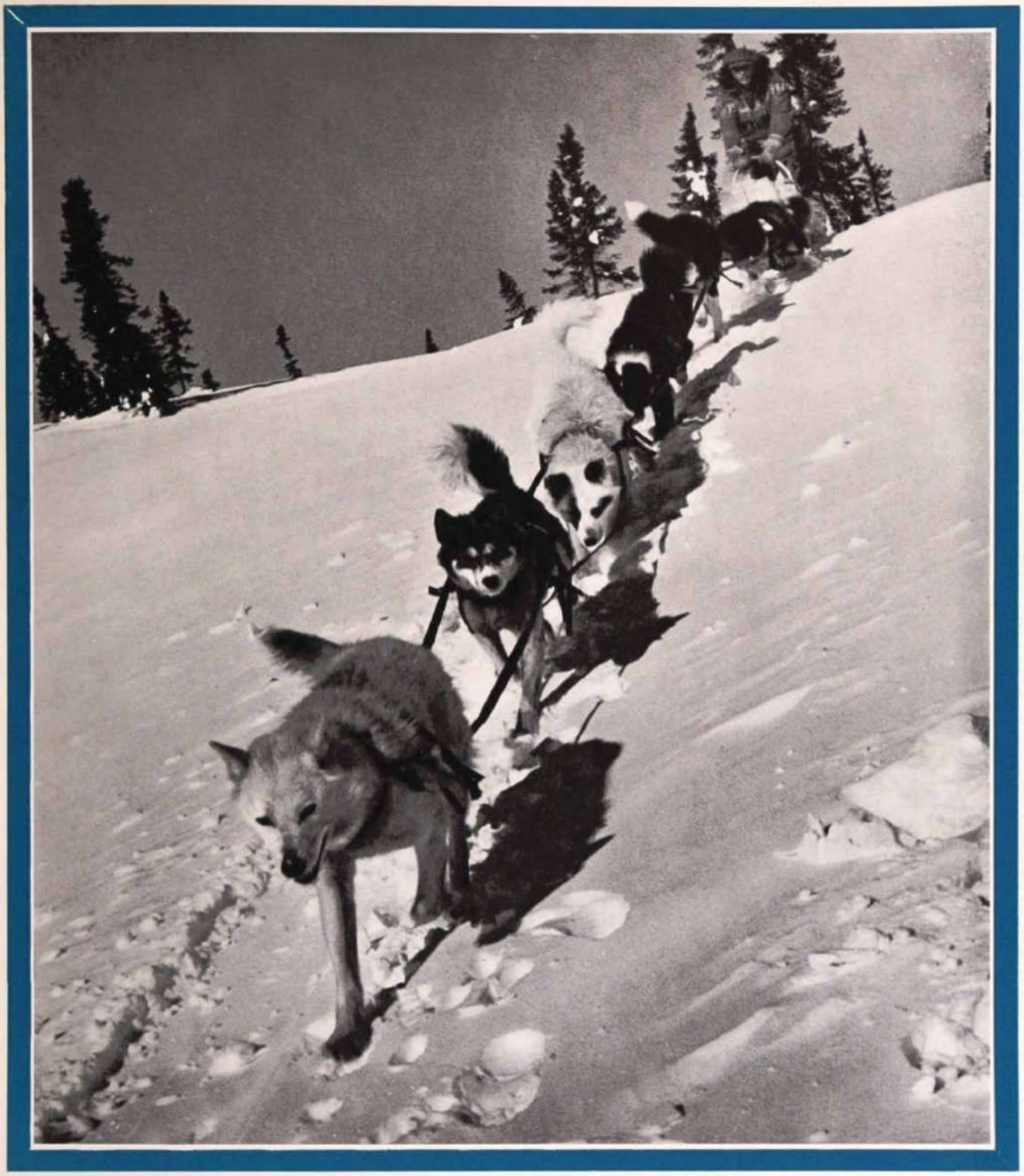
*These figures, according to Beckles Willson's *The Great Company*, p. 173, applied to the outfit and returns for 1676, and as such bore no relation to each other.—Ed.

CURTAIN TIME by Ruth Harvey. Thomas Allen Ltd., Toronto, and Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston, 1949. 310 pages.

THE chapter from *Curtain Time* which has been reprinted in the centre pages of this magazine gives an excellent idea of the gay descriptive writing, the charm and the humour to be found in this admirable book. Don't imagine that it is of local interest only. It's of interest to anyone who likes a lively story told with urbanity and sympathy. Such papers as the *New York Times* and *Herald-Tribune* have given it extensive and laudatory reviews, and as Cornelia Otis Skinner says, the whole book presents "a warmly nostalgic, colourfully authentic picture of those glamorous and mellow days when show business was show business."

Mrs. Harvey's parents, C. P. and Harriet Walker, were Americans by birth who came to Winnipeg when it was still a frontier town, and built there the finest theatre in the Canadian West. To its spacious stage came many of the great actors and actresses and concert artists of the day—Forbes Robertson, Schumann-Heink, Harry Lauder, Mrs. Patrick Campbell, Margaret Anglin, Robert Mantell, Maude Adams, Sir John Martin Harvey, and Chaliapin, to name a few.

The author as a small girl met many of these illustrious troupers and saw all of them perform, and the intimate tales she tells about some of them make delightful reading. Parts of the book deal with her European travels. There's a delicious bit about the show at the Bal Tabarin she almost didn't see, and a description of the ponderous Wagnerian festival at Munich that is full of chuckles. All in all, it is hard to think of any book that would make a better Christmas present for a lot of the adults on your list.—*C.W.*



Easy Sledding

Richard Harrington

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